An Error Analysis on the Use of Preposition on Students' Writing Descriptive Text

Hasrat Sozanolo Harefa
sozanoloe@gmail.com
IKIP Gunungsitoli

Roy Martin Laoli
roymartinlaoli@gmail.com
IKIP Gunungsitoli

Abstract

Students with different first languages will make an error when learning a second language or foreign language. It occurs in spoken or written form. Based on the researcher's observation and interview with the English teacher at SMK Negeri 1 Gunungsitoli Alo'oa, the researcher found some students' problems in using preposition in writing descriptive text. The purpose of the research is to analyze the type of errors that is made by the tenth grade of Agriculture Department in SMK Negeri 1 Gunungsitoli Alo'oa in using the preposition in writing descriptive text.. The research used Corder's theory of error classification namely, omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. As the result, the students made a 57.14% error on misformation, 26.53% on omission, 10.21% on addition, and 6.12% on misordering.

Keywords: Error Analysis, Preposition, Descriptive Text

INTRODUCTION

Students in learning the language as a foreign language usually make errors. It is probably happening in spoken or written form. Making an error is meaningful because this is a part of the learning process itself by Corder in Troike (2006:41). In other words, errors are a substantial part of the learning process because through making errors the teacher knows the students' comprehension of the teaching-learning process. Furthermore, James (2013:2) states: "… error is an observable phenomenon in FL/SL learning…" it means that error is an apparent accident in acquiring a foreign or second language. One of the observable errors that students make in learning FL/SL is in writing.

Focusing on students' writing, it is impossible if the students do not make the errors/mistakes during they are writing sentences or text. It is caused writing sentences in first language easier than write sentences in a second language or foreign language it is supported by James (1980:7).

Related to the writing activity, when a student writes their idea, it will be as a sentence, paragraph, and text. Text is any stretch of language that can be understood in context. It may be as simple as 1-2 words or as a complex as a novel. According to Wikipedia (2019), there are some types of text such as descriptive text, narrative text,

expository text, and argumentative text. Each of them has its characteristics and language features. Especially in descriptive text, it tells about the person, place, or things it is like. In describing a place, person, and thing, the descriptive text has one important thing in telling what the person, place, and things are like, it is a preposition. A preposition is a word used to show the position of the things you are going to describe. Errors in using preposition will make the meaning of the sentence is different, e.g. *book* and *elephant,* if we use the preposition, in and about, it will be *'the book is in elephant'* while in another sentence, '*the book is about an elephant.'* by Woods (2017:143).

Regarding the 2013 curriculum Syllabus of SMK Negeri 1 Gunungsitoli Alo'oa, it states that writing is included as one of the skills that should be taught to the students. The basic competence expects the students can make the descriptive texts orally or written, short and simple, related to people, things, and places, taking into social functions, text structures, and linguistics features correctly and in context. As well as, related to the students' achievement in learning especially in the English subject of the tenth grade of SMK Negeri 1 Gunungsitoli Alo'oa, the school has determined the Minimum Competence Criterion (MCC) that should be reached by the students is 65. The students should be able to pass the MCC as an indication of the students' success in learning.

Based on the researcher's observation and interview with the English teacher of SMK Negeri 1 Gunungsitoli Alo'oa, it was found some problem in using preposition in writing descriptive text. In writing descriptive text, some students did not fulfill the requirement in their writing. Focusing on grammar, they still make an error in describing something particularly in using a preposition. e.g. the student's writing "*My school on Nazalou Alo'oa village,"* meanwhile, the correct grammar is *"My school is in Nazalou Alo'oa Village."* The problem is caused. First, the students do not know the meaning of the prepositions. Second, the students can not differentiate kinds of prepositions, and third, the students can not use prepositions correctly. According to teacher explanation in an interview, it is natural if the students make errors during the learning process, she continued to inform that errors occurred because as an SL/FL learner in acquiring the FL/SL difficult than the mother tongue (first language).

Richard (1973:25) stated that learners' errors provide evidence of a system of the language that he has learned at a particular point in a course. Knows the students' errors is significant. Concerning that opinion, knows the learners' errors is useful for the teacher, researcher, and learners himself. Knows the students' errors will help the teacher know the students' understanding of a particular course.

Error Analysis

In conducting the error analysis research, the researcher should propose some classification of error depending on the location of the error made by the students based on the theory. Corder (1981:36) classified error into four such as errors of omission where some element is omitted which should be present; errors of addition where some element is present which should not be there; errors of selection where the wrong item has been chosen in place of the right one; and errors of order where the elements presented are correct but wrongly sequenced.

An alternative to a linguistic classification of error is to use surface strategy taxonomy by Ellis (1994:55). Surface strategy taxonomy "highlights the way surface structures are altered" by Dulay et al in Ellis (1994:55). Surface strategy taxonomy categories error into

four categories, such as omission, additions, misinformations, and misorderings. Continuously, the more explanation about strategy taxonomy can we look at the table below.

Table 1. Surface Strategy Taxonomy

Category	Description	Example
Omission	The absence of an item that must appear in a well-formed utterance	She sleeping
Additions	The presence of an item that must not appear in well-formed utterances	We didn't went there
Misinformations	The use of the wrong form of the morpheme or structure	The dog ated the chicken
Misorderings	The incorrect placement of a morpheme or group of morphemes in an utterances	What daddy is doing?

Source: Dulay, Burt, and Krashen 1982 in Ellis (1994:56)

METHOD

In analyzing the students' errors, the researcher used a qualitative method. Qualitative method is the process that is about inquiry, that helps in-depth understanding of the problems or issues in their natural setting. Natural means that qualitative research is done in the real setting as a direct source of data, as supported by Patton (2002:14) who states that "qualitative method facilitates of issues in-depth and detail." In other words, the qualitative method is a method of research to give a clear explanation about the issues, phenomena, or problems.

Furthermore, Robbert and Knopp (2006:274) state that qualitative research is an approach to social science research that emphasizes collecting descriptive data in a natural setting, uses inductive thinking and emphasizes understanding the subjects' point of view. Moreover, in qualitative research, the researcher does not build any hypothesis to be proved or disproved but accent the researcher's idea. The research describes the phenomenon and the situation which existed at the time of the research. The written result of the research contains the quotations from the data to illustrate and substantiate the presentation.

In collecting the data, the researcher used the test of descriptive writing. Creswell (2014:239) states that the data collection of qualitative research consists of some procedures as follows: identify the purposefully selected sites or individuals for the proposed study, a related topic would be the number of sites and participants to be involved in your study, indicate the types of data to be collected, collecting information through unstructured or semi-structured observations and interviews, documents, and visual materials, as well as establishing the protocol for recording information. Based on the theory above, the researcher followed those procedures. The researcher identified the participant of the research namely Class X ATPH 2 of SMK Negeri 1 Gunungsitoli Alo'oa, deciding the number of participants that consists of 24 students, the types of data that had

been collected is descriptive writing, as well as the researcher, collected the data through the test of descriptive writing.

The technique of data analysis used by the researcher in this research was a qualitative analysis technique which function was to describe and interpret the result of qualitative data. In analyzing the data, the researcher followed some procedures based on the theory of Corder (1974) in Ellis (1994: 48), as follows:

a. Identification of the errors. It requires the determination of elements in the sample of the students' writing which deviate from the target in some way.
b. Description of errors, it involves specifying how the forms by the students' differ from the target form. The errors are specified in some classifications such as omission, addition, misformation, and misordering.
c. Explanation of errors, it analyzes the cause of errors made by the students by considering the description of errors.
d. Evaluation. It involves the analysis of what effect the error has, on whoever is being addressed.

The similar concept of analyzing the data states by Gass and Selinker (2008:103) that consists of six steps:

a. Collect the data. It is typically gathered from the written data, and oral data. These data can we use as a basis.
b. Identify errors. It is the phase for the researcher to distinguish the errors (e.g., incorrect sequence of tenses, wrong verb form, etc).
c. Classify errors. Categorize the errors based on their types e.g. is it omission, addition, misinformation, or misorder?
d. Quantify errors. How many errors of omission occur? How many errors of addition occur?
e. Analyze source. The researcher explores the source of errors based on the findings. Why the students made errors?
f. Remediate. Based on the kind and frequency of an error type, pedagogical intervention is carried out.

Thus, the researcher adapted those steps which start from collecting the data, identification of error, description of the error, explanation of the error, and evaluation of error. In identying the students' errors the researcher used Grammarly.Apk cause it related to the grammar. In combining the data from the test, the researcher explained the students' errors as the result from the test, and makes a conclusion based on the result. It described in formula by Bluman (2012:38) to have the frequency and percentage of error as follows:

$$\% = \frac{f}{n} \cdot 100$$

Notes: f = Frequency
n = Total number of values

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
Types of Error from Students' Writing

In conducting the research, the researcher used the test. Based on the test result, the researcher analyzed the students' errors in using the preposition. In analyzed the students' errors in writing descriptive text, the researcher used Error Analysis Procedure,

namely identification of error (the researcher identified the location of errors). In identifying the students' errors the researcher used Grammarly.Apk to make it clear. Description of the error (the researcher describe the errors into four categories based on surface strategy taxonomy, were Omission, Addition, Misinformation, and Misordering), explanation of error (the researcher explain the errors) and evaluation of error (the researcher evaluated the errors and made possible correction of errors itself). The result of the types of students' errors for each type explained below.

a. Omission Errors (OM)

Based on the theory of omission, errors are characterized by the absence of an item that must appear in a well-formed utterance. Omission errors occur when an element of the sentence that could be presented is omitted. The same things happened to the students after the researcher analyzed their descriptive text.

Table: STUDENTS' ERRORS IN OMISSION

No.	Students' Writing	Correction
1	**Above** the teacher table we put a vase Ө flower	**on** the teacher table, we put a vase **of** flower
2	Teacher office is Ө **front of** my classroom.	Teacher office is **in front of** my classroom
3	Ө My guest room, there are...	**In** my guest room, there are...
4	**Next** Ө the guest room ...	**Next to** the guest room
5	I am a student Ө SMK Negeri 1 Gunungsitoli Alo'oa	I am a students **of** SMK Negeri 1 Gunungsitoli Alooa
6	I sit Ө **the right of** my classroom	I sit **on the right of** my classroom
7	there are windows **in right** Ө and **left** my Classroom	There are windows **on the right side** and **the left side** of my classroom
8	**Ө** the teacher table we put a vase flower	**on** the teacher table, we put a vase flower
9	I sit Ө **the back** row	I sit **at the back** row
10	I come Ө Nikootanodao Village.	I come **from** Nikootanodao village
11	my school located is Ө Nazalou Alo'oa village	My school is located **in** Nazalou Alo'oa village
12	I am a student Ө SMK Negeri 1 Gunungsitoli Alo'oa	I am a student **of** SMK Negeri 1 Gununsitoli Alo'oa
13	my classroom is **besides** the room Ө class X-ATPH 1	my classroom is **beside** the room **of** class X- ATPH 1
14	I sit Ө row **front of** classroom	I sit **in the front row of** the classroom
15	I live Ө Nazalou Lolowua village	I live **in** Nazalou Lolowua village
16	My school is located Ө Nazalou Alo'oa village	My school is located **in** Nazalou Alo'oa village
17	My classroom is X-ATPH 2 Located **beside** X-ATPH 1 and Ө teacher office	My classroom is X - ATPH 2 Located **beside** X-ATPH 1 and **behind** the teacher office
18	whiteboard **in front** the class	Whiteboard **in front of** the class

19	**In front Ө** tables and chairs	**In front of** tables and chairs
20	the school building area is Ө Nazalou Alo'oa village	The school building area is **in** Nazalou Alo'oa village
21	**Ө left side** there is my …	**On the left side**, there is
22	and Ө **back side** there are …	And **in the backside** there are
23	My bedroom is **next Ө** the living room	My bedroom is **next to** the living room
24	**Ө front of** my bedroom …	**In front of** my bedroom
25	**Ө right side of** my bedroom …	**On the right side of** my bedroom
26	the first kitchen **next Ө** the bathroom	The first kitchen **next to** the bathroom

b. Addition Errors (AD)

The addition is the opposite of the omission. On the students' writing descriptive text, the researcher found that some of the students wrote unnecessary prepositions that should not appear in using the preposition. The students did double marking where two items rather than one were marked for the same feature.

Table: STUDENTS' ADDITION ERRORS

No	Students' Writing	Correction
1	**At inside** my classroom there are twelve …	**Inside** my classroom, there are twelve …
2	**In inside** my house there are …	**Inside** my house there are …
3	**Besides** the teacher office …	**Beside** the teacher's office …
4	picture **in** the wall **of** president	president picture **on** the wall
5	my classroom is **besides** the room Ө class X-ATPH 1	my classroom is **beside** the room of class X- ATPH 1
6	my classroom is **at beside** Class X-ATPH 1	my classroom is **beside** Class X-ATPH 1
7	and **besides** the classroom X ATPH 1	and **beside** the classroom X ATPH 1
8	book rack **besides** the bed …	book rack **beside** the bed …
9	I like living **at** there	I like living there
10	There are a box and **at** there are a newspaper	There is a box and there is a newspaper

c. Misformation Errors (MF)

Related to the theory that misformation is the use of the wrong form of the morpheme or structure. After the researcher analyzed the students' worksheets, the researcher found that most of the students made misformation's errors; it showed on the table below.

Table: STUDENTS' ERRORS IN MISFORMATION

No	Students' Writing	Correction
1	**above** the teacher table we put a vase ⊖ flower	**on** the teacher table, we put a vase **of** flower
2	**in wall** we stuck of president picture and Garuda picture	**on** the wall, we stuck the president picture and Garuda picture
3	it is located **at** Nazalou Alo'oa Village	it is located **in** Nazalou Alo'oa Village
4	My house is **at** Nazalou Alo'oa Village	My house is **In** Nazalou Alo'oa
5	there are windows **in right** ⊖ and **left** my Classroom	there are windows **on the right side** and **the left side of** my classroom
6	**in front of** class there is whiteboard **behind** the teacher table	**in front of** the class, there is a teacher table, **next to** the teacher table is a whiteboard
7	**in** my classroom there are many things,	**Inside** my classroom, there are many things
8	picture **in** a wall	pictures **on** the wall
9	I go to school **by** foot	I go to school **on** foot
10	picture **in** the wall **of** president	president picture **on** the wall
11	and the students' table **besides** the teacher table	and the students' tables **in front of** the teacher's table
12	we put a vase of flower **below** the tablecloth	we put a vase of flower **on** the tablecloth
13	I read book **in** library	I read the book **at** the library
14	**at front** my classroom there are flowers	**in front of** my classroom, there are flowers
15	**in** table there is flower	**on** the table, there is a flower
16	it is **in side** the class X ATPH 1	it is **beside** the class X ATPH 1
17	I sit **in** first row	I sit **on** the first row
18	we put a vase **above** it	we put a vase **on** it
19	**at** my classroom …	**In** my classroom …
20	**on** the whiteboard	**above** the whiteboard
21	**at the corner of** my classroom …	**in the corner** of my classroom
22	**above** the teacher's desk	**on** the teacher's desk …
23	… the best schools **at** my subdistrict	… the best schools **in** my subdistrict.
24	My house is located **at** Iraonolase Village	My house is located **in** Iraonolase village
25	**at** the living room there …	**in** the living room, there are …
26	My house is located **at** Orahili Tanose'o Village	My house is located **In** Orahili Tanose'o village
27	and framed photos **above** the wall …	and framed photos **on** the wall …
28	spacious room **at** my house	spacious room **in** my house
29	**at** the living room …	**in** the living room …
30	My house is located **at** Fadoroyou village	My house is located **in** Fadoroyou village
31	**at** this room	**in** this room

32	are refrigerator **behind** the door	are refrigerator **beside** the door
33	My house is located **at** Nazalou Lolowua village	My house is located **In** Nazalou Lolowua village
34	it is the biggest room **at** this house …	it is the biggest room **in** this house …
35	**at** this room,	**in** this room,
36	… television hanging **above** the wall	… television hanging **on** the wall.
37	and Ө **back side** there are …	**in the back of** my house, there are …
38	there are rooms **at** my house	there are some rooms **in** my house
39	and flowers **above** the table	and flowers **on** the table
40	there are photos of my families **at** the wall.	there are photos of my families **on** the wall
41	have a talk **at** this room	talk **in** this room
42	… a refregerator **at** this room	a refrigerator **in** this room
43	I live **at** a small house	I live **in** a small house
44	… a novel **at** this room	… a novel **in** this room
45	… is **in the left side of** the living room	… is **on the left side of** the living room
46	**at** the kitchen I have everything …	**in** the kitchen I have everything …
47	**at** my bedroom …	**in** my bedroom
48	**above** the desk …	**on** the desk …
49	… a bolster **above** the bed.	… a bolster **on** the bed.
50	there is a clock **at** the wall	there is a clock **on** the wall.
51	… little bed **in the left side** near the window.	little bed **on the left side** near the window
52	because **in** that table	because **on** that table
53	… books **above** my table,	… books **on** my table,
54	I put it **in the left side of** my table.	I put it **on the left side of** my table.
55	and **in the right side** I put …	and **on the right side,** I put …
56	**In** the wall I put my schedule	**on** the wall, I put my schedule

d. Misordering Errors (MO)

Misordering is the incorrect placement of a morpheme or group of morphemes in an utterance. It happened because the students put some elements or words in the wrong place. The error of misordering refers to the sentences where the words are written correctly but wrongly sequenced. Based on the researcher's analysis of the data, it was found the students' errors in misordering showed in the table below.

Table: STUDENTS' ERRORS IN MISORDERING

No	Students' Writing	Correction
	in front of class there is whiteboard **behind** the teacher table	**in front of** the class, there is a teacher table, **next to** the teacher table is a whiteboard
	whiteboard **above** the president picture	President picture **above** the whiteboard
	Broosh on the corner after my chair.	after my chair, there is a broom on the corner of my classroom

my school located is Ө Nazalou Alo'oa village	my school is located **in** Nazalou Alo'oa village
I sit Ө row front of classroom	I sit **in the front** row of the classroom
on the wall picture of family photo	The family photo is on the wall

After analyzed the students' error in writing descriptive text, the researcher counted the errors by using the table and calculated the types of error, afterward the researcher processed the calculation of the result on percentage. The result of the recapitulation of the types of errors can be drawn on the chart below.
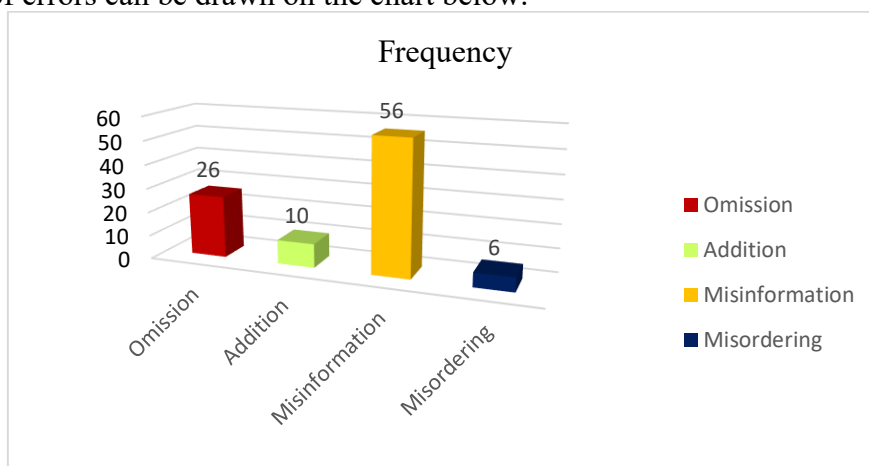
Figure 2. The Frequency of Students' Errors

CONCLUSION

Concerning to purpose of the research is to find out the types and most frequent errors of students' writing descriptive text especially in using preposition, the authors find it through the result of the test. The students' error on the use of preposition writing descriptive text is concluded that there are 98 items errors in using preposition in writing descriptive text, which is 26 errors on omission, (26.53%), 10 errors on addition (10.21%), 56 errors on misformation (57.14%) and 6 errors on misordering (6.12%). Briefly, the most frequent errors is misinformation, then omission, addition, and misordering.

REFERENCES

Altenberg, Evelyn, P. ; Vago, Robert, M. 2010. *English Grammar Understanding the Basic*. United Stated of America; Cambridge University Press, New York.

Anjayani, Pindho, ; Drs.Suprapto, M.Hum, (2016). *Error Analysis on the Use of Prepositions in Students' Writing (A Case Study of the Eleventh Grade Students of SMA Negeri 9 Semarang in the Academic Year of 2014/2015)*, Journal of English Language Teaching (http://journal.unnes.ac.id/sju/index.php/elt) ISSN 2252-6706, Universitas Negeri Semarang.

Bennie, Michael, 2009. *A Guide to Good Business Communication 5th Edition How to Write and Speak English Well in Every Business Situation,* United Kingdom; How to Content a Division of How to Books Ltd.

Bluman, Allan, G, 2012. *Elementary Statistic: A Step by Step Approach, Eighth Edition,* New York ; McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.

Corder, S., P., 1981. *Error Analysis and Interlanguage*, New York: Oxford University Press

Creswell, John, W., 2014. *Research Design Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches Fourth Edition,* California: SAGE Publication, Inc.

Crystal, David, 2008. *A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics Sixth Edition,* USA: Blackwell Publishing.

DK, 2016. *English for Everyone English Grammar Guide,* New York, United State: DK Publishing.

Ellis, Rod, 1994. *The Study of Second Language Acquisition.*

Gass, Susan, M. ; Selinker, Lary, 2008. *Second Language Acquisition An Introductory Course Third Edition,* New York: Routledge.

Gay, L., R., ; Mills, Geoffrey, E., ; Airasian, Peter, 2012. *Educational Research, Competencies for Analysis and Applications, Tenth Edition,* United State, ; Pearson Education, Inc

Gulo, Imanan, Jaya. 2019. *An Error Analysis on the Use of Simple Past Tense in Writing Narrative Text at the Tenth Grade of SMA Negeri 1 Tuhemberua in 2018/2019.* IKIP Gunungsitoli; Gunungsitoli.

Hatch, Amos, 2002, Doing qualitative research in education settings, State University of New York Press, Albany.

James, Carl, 2013. *Errors in Language Learning and Use Exploring Error Analysis.* London and New York: Routledge.

James, Carl. 1998. *Error in Language Learning and Use*. New York: Longman.

Kane, Thomas, S., 2000. *The Oxford Essential Guide to Writing,* New York: Berkley Book, Oxford University Press. Inc.

Lembayung, Tiara, 2017. *An Error Analysis of Preposition of Place in Students' Descriptive Text Writing at the First Semester of the Eight Grade of MTs Yapenbaya Katibung South Lampung in the Academic Year of 2017/2018.* Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Intan Lampung, Bandar Lampung.

LearnGrammar.NET. 2020. *English Grammar, Prepositions of Places, and Direction Usage.* Online (https://www.learngrammar.net/english-grammar/prepositions-of-places-n-direction-usage) Accessed on 6th July 2020 LearnEnglish.NET.

McLoughlin, Aoife, 2016. *Five Fun Activities to Teach Prepositions*. Online (https://www.britishcouncil.org/voices-magazine/five-fun-activities-prepositions) Accessed on 6th July 2020 British Council; United Kingdom.

Novia, Windy, 2009. *Essential English Grammar, Complete Edition.* Gama Press

Patton, Michael, Quinn, 2002. *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods Third Edition,* United States, America: Sage Publication, Inc.

Purnomo, Wahyu, ..., *English Grammar and Everyday Conversation (Tata Bahasa dan Percakapan Bahasa Inggris Sehari-hari),* Surabaya: Amelia.

Putri, Debby Anjayu, 2019. *An Error Analysis of Preposition on Students' Writing Descriptive Text at SMA SERIRAMA YLPI Pekanbaru.* Universitas Islam Riau, Pekanbaru.

Richard, Jack. C, 1973. *Error Analysis Perspectives on Second Language Acquisition.* New York: Longman.

Richards, Jack. C, ; Schmidt, Richard. 2010. *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics, Fourth Edition,* England, London, ; Pearson Education Limited.

Robert, C. Bogdan, ; Sari Knopp Biklen, *Qualitative Research for Education 5th Edition An Introduction to Theories and Methods*, (Boston: Pearson Education, Inc., 2006)

Shenton, Andrew, K, 2004. *Strategies for Ensuring Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research Projects,* Vol 22, January, 63-75. UK ; IOS Press.

Silverman, David, ; Marvasti, Amir, 2008. *Doing Qualitative Research a Comprehensive Guide.* Los Angels; Sage Publications, Inc.

Troike, Muriel Saville, 2006. *Introducing Second Language Acquisition.* United State: Cambridge University Press.

VanPatten, Bill, ; Benati, Alessandro, G., 2010. *Key Terms in Second Language Acquisition,* New York: Continuum International Publishing Group.

Widiati,Utami. ; Rohmah, Zuliati dan Furaidah. 2017. *Buku Guru Bahasa Inggris SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Kelas X Edisi Revisi 2017.* Jakarta: Pusat Kurikulum dan Perbukuan, Balitbang, Kemendikbud

Wikipedia, 2019. *Text Types, (Online), (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Text_types Accessed on 18th January 2020).* Wikimedia Foundation, Inc.

Woods, Geraldine, 2017. *English Grammar for Dummies Third Edition*, Canada: John Willey & Sons, Inc, Hoboken, New Jersey.

Zemach, Dorothy, A., ; Rumisek, Lisa, A., 2003. *Academic Writing from Paragraph to Essay*. Macmillan.