

Indonesian EFL Journal

AISSE

THE ASSOCIATION OF
INDONESIAN SECONDARY
EDUCATION TEACHERS

Indonesian EFL Journal
Volume 1 Issue 1
January 2013

Indonesian EFL Journal

eISSN : 25413635 | pISSN : 22527427

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H-Index

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Home > Vol 6, No 2 (2020)

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	CN 929		PS 38
	MY 737		FI 36
	PH 585		MA 35
	IR 456		TZ 34
	CA 398		KZ 33
	IN 364		CR 30
	DE 355		TT 26
	HK 352		GH 25

Home > **Reviewers**

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	IR 456		TZ 34
	CA 398		KZ 33
	IN 364		CR 30
	DE 355		TT 26
	HK 352		GH 25

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	PH 585		MA 35
	IR 456		TZ 34
	CA 398		KZ 33
	IN 364		CR 30
	DE 355		TT 26
	HK 352		GH 25

Vol 6, No 2 (2020)

Table of Contents

Articles

STUDENTS PERCEPTIONS OF E-LEARNING FOR ESL/EFL IN SAUDI UNIVERSITIES AT TIME OF CORONAVIRUS: A LITERATURE REVIEW

Khaled Layali, Ahmed Al-Shlowiy

PDF
97-108

WHAT DO PEOPLE DO TO SUSTAIN A CONVERSATION: ANALYSIS OF THE FEATURES AND THE SPEECH FUNCTION OF A CASUAL CONVERSATION

Latifa Ika Sari, Ria Hermina Sari

PDF
109-120

EXPLORING EFL TEACHERS UNDERSTANDING AND BELIEFS IN INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN INDONESIAN CONTEXT

Nisa Hasanah, Wawan Gunawan

PDF
121-126

DESIGNATION OF GENDER ON ELECTRONIC EFL TEXTBOOK FOR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Imam Santosa

PDF
127-138

USING GIBBS REFLECTIVE CYCLE IN MAKING REFLECTIONS OF LITERARY ANALYSIS

Ikin Syamsudin Adeani, R. Bunga Febriani, Syafryadin Syafryadin

PDF
139-148

PADLET FOR ENGLISH SPEAKING ACTIVITY: A CASE STUDY OF PROS AND CONS ON ICT

Trisnendri Syahrizal, Silpia Rahayu

PDF
149-156

SMARTPHONE VIDEO RECORDING AS A LEARNING TOOL TO IMPROVE INDONESIAN EFL STUDENTS SPEAKING PERFORMANCE

Dzakiah Dzakiah, Muhammad Azwar Assiddiq, Sri Hariati Mustari

PDF
157-164

UNDERSTANDING AND EVALUATING PERSONAL LETTER WRITING: A SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL LINGUISTICS ANALYSIS OF STUDENT TEXTS IN ONE OF SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL IN INDONESIA

Alfira Veronica Mangana, Eri Kurniawan

PDF
165-174

NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION PERFORMED BY FOREIGN ENGLISH TEACHER

Jihan Ananda, Dadang Solihat, Yayan Suryana

PDF
175-188

MORPHOLOGICAL INTERFERENCE ON STUDENTS WRITING

Muziatun Muziatun, Indri Wirahmi Bay, Sitti Maryam

PDF
189-196

00070225

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[ARTICLE TEMPLATE](#)

[PUBLICATION ETHICS](#)

[ONLINE SUBMISSION](#)

[PEER REVIEWERS](#)

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[INDEXING AND ABSTRACTING](#)

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» [For Readers](#)
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US 4,446	BT 41
GB 2,586	CH 40
AU 1,029	PE 38
CN 929	PS 38
MY 737	FI 36
PH 585	MA 35
IR 456	TZ 34
CA 398	KZ 33
IN 364	CR 30
DE 355	TT 26
HK 352	GH 25

MORPHOLOGICAL INTERFERENCE ON STUDENTS WRITING

Muziatun Muziatun, Indri Wirahmi Bay, Sitti Maryam

Abstract

The aim of this research is to find out the types of morphological interference on students' English writing. Through qualitative research method applying a design of the case study, twenty of university students were chosen. Data were collected from written tests and classified based on the Politzer and Ramires (1973) on theory of Linguistic Category. The results revealed that, whilst it is inevitable that the English morphology features governed by the distinctive rules and systems have been the potential target for interference taking place, Bahasa Indonesia, which stands as the official language, becomes the source of transfer. From six types of morphological interference based on Politzer and Ramirez (1973), in this study the writer only found three of them. These types encompass of the morphological properties from the use of article, plural marker and simple past tense. Furthermore, there are 40 morphological mistakes in total, in which four mistakes represent the intralingual transfer and 36 data describe the interference. In terms of the mistakes made as a result mostly from the interference transfer. This study makes a significant contribution to the teaching and learning process of linguistic interference.

Keywords: *linguistic interference; morphology; students writing.*

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[PUBLICATION ETHICS](#)

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	CN 929		PS 38
	MY 737		FI 36
	PH 585		MA 35
	IR 456		TZ 34
	CA 398		KZ 33
	IN 364		CR 30
	DE 355		TT 26
	HK 352		GH 25

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TR	304	HU	21
SA	272	LB	18
PK	194	YE	18
IE	187	LK	17
SG	184	NP	17
ES	175	MT	17
EC	163	QA	16
JP	152	UA	16
KR	143	HR	16
TW	135	LV	15
NL	132	KH	15
NZ	131	CZ	15
SE	123	PT	14
CO	122	DK	14
ZA	115	PA	13
EG	101	JM	13
CL	95	MU	12
OM	95	CY	12
AT	87	TN	11
NO	86	LY	10
FR	82	LT	10
IQ	79	MM	10
NG	77	EE	9
MX	75	SK	9
RU	74	BB	9
DZ	69	MV	9
KE	69	PR	9
IL	69	NA	9
BD	66	RS	8
BR	60	ZW	7
GR	60	BZ	7
ET	56	RO	7
AE	53	BH	7
JO	49	DO	7
IT	49	AF	6
PL	49	PY	6

Pageviews: 72 , 758



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APA Citation: Muziatun, M., Bay, I. W., & Maryam, S. (2020). Morphological interference on student's writing. *Indonesian EFL Journal*, 6(2), 189-196. doi: 10.25134/ieflj.v6i2.3425.

Received: 12-04-2019

Accepted: 14-06-2019

Published: 01-07-2020

Abstract: The aim of this research is to find out the types of morphological interference on students' English writing. Through qualitative research method applying a design of the case study, twenty of university students were chosen. Data were collected from written tests and classified based on the Politzer and Ramires (1973) on theory of Linguistic Category. The results revealed that, whilst it is inevitable that the English morphology features governed by the distinctive rules and systems have been the potential target for interference taking place, Bahasa Indonesia, which stands as the official language, becomes the source of transfer. From six types of morphological interference based on Politzer and Ramirez' (1973), in this study the writer only found three of them. These types encompass of the morphological properties from the use of article, plural marker and simple past tense. Furthermore, there are 40 morphological mistakes in total, in which four mistakes represent the intralingual transfer and 36 data describe the interference. In terms of the mistakes made as a result mostly from the interference transfer. This study makes a significant contribution to the teaching and learning process of linguistic interference.

Keywords: *linguistic interference; morphology; students' writing.*

INTRODUCTION

In foreign language learning, English Foreign Language (EFL) students will always confront some difficulties in mastering English (Misbah, 2017). When they are learning English, they regularly make mistakes whether in their speaking or writing. Therefore, in learning English as a foreign language, learners need to learn about the system and rules of writing well, because the system and the rules for both English and Indonesian are different (Raissah & Aziz, 2020; Sari, 2016; Septiana, 2020). The difference may cause errors or mistakes. Based on Samingan (2016), in his research foreign language learners sometimes get difficulty in mastering English. It happens because of the interference of first language learning (FLL) into English. Furthermore, what they have found when studying English will depend on the degree and ability of what they have obtained in English. It means when a learner can understand English well, the possibility of mistakes in writing English will be less compared to a learner who has not fully understood English. Many factors influence students in mastering English skills, one of them

is because of the interference of first language learning (Budiharto, 2019).

Interference is the exchange of language systems used in other elements of language which is viewed as a mistake because it deviates from the rules of the language used (Jafaroya, 2017; Syaputri, 2019). Interference is the deviation of language norm in usage as the effect of multilingual toward some other languages (Irmalia, 2016; Qomariana & Rahayuni, 2019; Alkhudiry, 2020). Interference happens when the students using the target language (English) and ones that are interfered with the target language is the first language learning (Lao, 2017; Bacala, 2017).

Indonesia and English are different in some language features, one such difference are the construction of noun and verb. For instance, when an Indonesian language student uses the word "go", it's not a mistake he uses one word go but when using it in a simple sentence in the Indonesian language "dia pergi" instead of "he goes" or "she goes". A student who learns English might say "he go". This is caused of no system of agreement or concord between noun and verb

(subject and predicate) in the Indonesian language; all the subjects are followed by the same predicate (verb) such as "I go", "She go", "They go" (Mu'in, 2008, p. 7). However, when Indonesian students who are lack of practice in English, they often make mistakes in the form of interference from the first language (FLL) and they do not even realize the differences.

Based on the lecturer of the participants, researcher's preliminary visit, when she gave an examination to the participant, the lecturer said that the students had some difficulties to write paragraphs, especially the paragraphs that describe past event, because of the alteration of verb/auxiliary verb from present to past tense. Furthermore, the students said it was hard to choose the types of verb when making paragraphs in past event, such as describe an experiment that happened in the past. In general, mostly students feel writing is a complicated skill. (Karademir & Gorgoz, 2019; Setyowati & Sukmawan, 2016; Mantra & Widiastuti, 2019; Ximenes, Guterres, & Pereira, 2019), Therefore, it can be concluded that morphological interference become a serious problem in learning writing especially for the foreign language learners such as twenty students of C class of English Department state University of Gorontalo. By seeing this fact, an analysis is needed to know what are the types of morphological interference that made by the students.

METHOD

This study aim to answer the following research question: What are the types of morphological interference committed by the students in the fifth semester of the English department state University of Gorontalo academic year of 2019-2020 in their English writing?

This study employs the qualitative case study since the data is in form of words, phrases, and sentences. It is also because the qualitative case study is descriptive in nature and related to human behavior of how people behave, feel, and think (Gammelgaard, 2017).

The participants of this study were the fifth-semester students. The number of students in class C of the English Department of the fifth semester was 20 students. It consists of 15 female students and 5 male students. In order to gather the data, twenty of document analysis is conducted.

The data of document were analyzed based on the qualitative data analysis of document model

by Harding (2018);

Identifying the interference

In starting the process of data analysis, the researcher identified the mistake that is found in determining the morphological types. In doing this process, the writer also provided suggested constructions of the mistake so that it would be clear that a particular deviant form in the words or even sentences is considered as a mistake. Since this case study had been one to spot the morphological interference in English writing, all data from the text were underlined on which the interlingual transfer is based and classified for further analysis.

Classifying the interference

After identifying the interference into morphological interference as determining the interference types, the writer, then, classified the mistake into some specific categories based on morphological types. Linguistics Category Taxonomies, by using Politzer and Ramirez's model taxonomy. Based on this model of taxonomies, morphological interference in this research is classified into six categories which are indefinite article, possessive, plural marker, simple past, past participle, comparative adjectives, or adverbs. Additionally, surface taxonomy of Dulay, et al.as cited in Rusmiati (2019) was applied as the scheme to support the categorized or location of the interference fall that made by the participants.

Explanation of the interference

In this step, the writer explained how and why the sentences called to be interference. this step consists of the phenomena that happen regarding the interference, how the interference could happen, why the data called to be interference, how the previous study dealt with this phenomena, and the theories that could strengthen the data. This step has been explained in the discussion part.

Conclusion

Drawing a conclusion from the explanation of the data, in the form of answering the research question is to achieve the objectivity of this research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings and discussion are presented consecutively and organized based on its relevance with the research question. The finding of the study was dealing with the theory of interference in chapter II, and several related studies. To best categorize the data into the type of morphological interference, this study employs

the theory by Politzer and Ramirez as cited in Andre (2018) which were indefinite articles, possessive, plural marker, simple past, past participle, comparative adjective or adverb. The results show that there were only three types of morphological interference occur in students' writing (descriptive text). They were an article, plural marker, and simple past tense. Dealing with the process of foreign language learning, the

influence of FLL behavior still dominates students' cognitive process in selecting the morphological interference on students' English writing.

The data were presented and categorized based on the types of morphological interference those are organized based on the frequency of occurrences. In order to visualize the types, was depicted in the following tables:

Table 1. *Indefinite article of morphological interference occurrence on students' English writing*

Indefinite article				
No.	Identified of the Interference	Nt	De	Reconstruction
1.	We immediately built *tent and cooked		✓	We immediately built a tent and cooked
2.	After I got <u>an</u> permission from my parents to		✓	After I got a permission from my parents to
3.	I had <u>a</u> amazing experience when		✓	I had an amazing experience when

Table 2. *Plural marker of morphological interference occurrence on students' English writing*

Plural marker				
No.	Identified of the Interference	Nt	De	Reconstruction
1.	I had <u>some</u> creepy <u>experience</u>	✓		I had some creepy experiences
2.	I could meet them again after <u>six month</u> .	✓		I could meet them again after six months .
3.	After <u>two week</u> , I should back to my dormitory.	✓		After two weeks , I should back to my dormitory.
4.	I took <u>some photograph</u> of the bridge.	✓		I took some photographs of the bridge.
5.	I climbed mount Ambang <u>three month</u> ago.	✓		I climbed mount Ambang three months ago.
6.	We took <u>some picture</u> .	✓		We took some pictures .
7.	I went to the market and bought <u>some seasoning</u> at there.	✓		I went to the market and bought some seasonings at there.
8.	We spent holiday by visiting <u>some</u> favorite <u>place</u> in my home town.	✓		We spent holiday by visiting some favorite places in my home town.
9.	We took <u>some photo</u> with the beautiful view of twins tower.	✓		We took some photos with the beautiful view of twins tower.
10.	I was so happy, but there were <u>some correction</u> that he gave to me.	✓		I was so happy, but there were some corrections that he gave to me.
11.	We met many friends from <u>other province</u> , they were so kind and friendly.	✓		We met many friends from other provinces , they were so kind and friendly.
12.	It is <u>one</u> of the beautiful <u>mountain</u> in Gorontalo	✓		It is one of the beautiful mountains in Gorontalo

Table 3. *Simple past tense of morphological interference occurrence on students' English writing*

Simple past tense				
No.	Identified of the Interference	Nt	De	Reconstruction
1.	In my holiday <u>last year</u> , I visited my aunt's house and <u>stay</u> for two weeks there.	✓		In my holiday last year, I visited my aunt's house and stayed for two weeks there.
2.	<u>Last week</u> , I was cooking in my room when my mother <u>call</u>	✓		Last week, I was cooking in my room when my mother called

	me.		me.
3.	<u>Last year</u> , for the first time I <u>celebrate</u> my birthday without my parents.	✓	Last year, for the first time I celebrated my birthday without my parents.
4.	My friend said he <u>would paid</u> my food.	✓	My friend said he would pay my food.
5.	A few minutes later, finally I <u>could moved</u> my body and opened my eyes.	✓	A few minutes later, finally I could move my body and opened my eyes.
6.	I had a little problem that I <u>could not forgot</u> .	✓	I had a little problem that I could not forget .

Table 4. *Type and number of errors in each category made by the students*

No.	Types of morphology	Cases	Nt	De
1.	Plural marker	18	18	0
2.	Past tense	14	10	4
3.	Article	3	0	3
4.	Possessive 's	0	0	0
5.	Past participle ing/ed	0	0	0
6.	Comparative/superlative adjective	0	0	0

As follows from several tables above, it has been found that there were thirty five features that indicate as morphological Interference. The dominant types of occurrences were plural marker, past tense, and article. The table above provides the results of the written tests obtained from the participants that illustrate the mistakes in the order of words. It is apparent from this table that mistakes arising under those tables were mostly affected by interference.

Research Question: Kinds of morphological Interference in English Writing

The question of this study sought to find out the types of morphological features that contain interference in students' English writing. Previous studies into the types of morphological interference in students' English writing have revealed that the interference occurring within the field of morphology are adequate rampant in the analysis of the learners' English written production. Those interference comprise mainly of the uses those mistakes comprise mainly of the uses indefinite article, possessive case, plural marker, simple past tense, past participle and comparative, and the last, adjective/adverb (Hamzah, 2012; & Indri, 2018). Yet, to address the research question this present study anchored to the linguistic taxonomy of Politzer and Ramirez (1973) as the main conceptual theoretical framework by which the morphological interference in all participants' writing was coded. Moreover, to better recognize the alteration to English morphological form, surface taxonomy of Dulay, et al. (1982) was applied as the scheme to support the location of the interference made by participants.

Grounding in the research framework, this study found three kinds of morphological interference in all that contained interference emerging from the test results where these types of morphological interference committed by participants slightly vary with each respondent. These three types encompass the morphological interference from the article, plural marker, and past tense marker. In the following subsections, all these categories of morphological errors are discussed. Preceding the analysis is the discussions of the existing categories of Politzer and Ramirez's (1973) morphological which will be discussed in isolation.

The explanation of morphological interference types has been found, how, and why the sentences called to be interference. This step consists of the phenomena that happened regarding the interference, how the interference could happen, why the data called to be interference, how the previous study dealt with this phenomena, and the theories that could strengthen the data. The types of morphological interference that has been found in this research are explained below;

The first morphological interference which is found on students' writing is an identified article. It is the lowest mistake in students writing. It likely occurs because the students' faulty understanding of distinctions of target language items leads to false conceptualization or the students get confused about the concept to identify an article itself.

In the element of determiner, the findings indicated that the uses of articles, which include the definite and indefinite article, have been a big deal for the students in this present study so far

since morphological interference in the noun phrase had mostly been found within this type. Mistakes that occurred inside this type were predominantly omission and misformation where a certain particular item of the TL (English) which ought to exist properly based upon its well-formed structure has been left out. A sample representing mistake in this type is as follows: "..., We immediately built * (a) tent and cooked". As seen in this datum, the participant omitted a necessary item of the definite article that modifies the noun "tent". For a native speaker, distinguishing and using the articles properly in a sentence need no effort; non-native speakers, by contrast, will have difficulties figuring out their use in a sentence (Indri, 2018). Regarding this, the omission of mistakes in English articles has been inevitable for participants in this study because articles do not exist in the previous languages of participants.

The second interference which is found on students writing is a plural marker. It is the dominant mistake that students produce in this text. Plural markers have occurred on omission and addition. The omission of mistakes in plural markers has happened because the students omit the suffix *-s* at the end of the word noun. In this case, the students make the mistake of nouns that should be followed by a plural noun, but the students do not apply it to their writing. While the addition of mistakes has occurred when an item that should not be appeared in a well-formed of the noun which is there is additional letter or suffix *-s* at the end that is not necessary on the word. In this case, the students add suffix *-s* at the end of the word. It might happen because in the Indonesian language there is no adding suffix *-s* in the end of the word noun when it makes plurality. It is supported by Hamzah (2012, p.2) states that the mistake may be attributable to the different system of plurality between Indonesian language and English where the Indonesian only has quantifiers before nouns without an additional affixed plural marker to a noun.

Moreover, the certain English Noun phrase that happened under the omission of mistakes has with the element of number. This element as stated by Nani (2019) essentially deals with the singular and plural form of a count noun inside the construction of the noun phrases. Accordingly, when these modifiers denote plurality, a noun that precedes one of them then should be in the plural form. Conversely, a noun will be in the form of singular when one of these modifiers is in the singular form. In the previous

languages of participants, the rule of plurality, however, does not exist, because such a concept in the previous languages of participants is comprehensible through their context. As such, it is unsurprising that mistakes of omission within this type can be found as in "...We took some picture* (pictures)..."

The third type is simple past tense. The mistakes occurred when the tenses in writing should be past tense and the students made all of the verbs in the present tense. It happens because both languages have a different structure. In Indonesia the verb will not change based on the time, it just had '*keterangan waktu*' like *sekarang*, *kemarin*, *lalu*, *besok*, *lusa*, and *nanti*. While in English the verb should be changed based on the time. When the time is a past time then the verb must be added by *-ed* or changed the word to *verb2*. In addition, the students do not know after auxiliary verb should be followed by verb one, not verb two. In this case, the students produce verb mistake on their documentary because the student does not understand the usage of modal auxiliary and the similar expression of the modal. Furthermore, the students put suffix *-ed* in the end of the word verb after a modal. It also happened because, in Indonesian, there is no auxiliary verb. Therefore, the student made a mistake in making a sentence in English. They did not insert *verb1* after an auxiliary verb.

Based on the explanation above, those types of morphological interference found on students' text can be concluded that most of the students weak are plural, past tense, and article in morphological interference. In this case, the writer can be seen many students are more interfered with within identified the plural marker. It might happen because in the Indonesian language there is no agreement about plurality. Moreover, there is no adding suffix *-s* at the end of the word noun that becomes the symbol of plurality.

Paying attention to the above analyses, this study indicated that interference in English morphological features commonly occurs in certain patterns which in particular have structural rule distinction between English and Indonesian rules. More simply, all the findings as regards the kinds of morphological interference emerged from the participants' writing indicated that the entire mistakes positively arise by dint of the different systems and rules governing in the languages. With this in mind, it is then clear as to why misformation of English patterns as discovered in this formation (article and past

tense), the omission of necessary morphological items as found in plural marker and past tense, and addition are likely to be committed by the participants in this study.

Hamzah (2012) study exposed findings strikingly similar to the results of this present study: students normally committed to excluding English linguistic features, such as plurality markers, and past tense. Recently investigators also highlighted that interference in students' English writing typically takes place in the plural marker, SVA, past tense, and progressing -ing and those mistakes arise in studied misuse the linguistic items, misformation on the items, omission to the essential items and even addition redundant items in sentences (Samingan, 2016).

Overall, the result of this writer is different with Indri's finding (2018), in her study that she found, there are six types of morphological interference, such as plurals, tenses, demonstrative, VSA, participle -ing and -ed, and to the infinitive in academic writing of students proposal's. In addition, another writer, Syaputri (2018) who investigated interference made by EFL at the University of Indonesia has also reported the difference finding regarding morphological interference. In her research, she found that the students produce interference on morphology in the plural, singular, and repeated words in students' descriptive texts.

The result of this study reveals from six types of morphological interference. Further, there are three types of morphological interference are committed namely plural, past tense, and article. From all the types that have been found, it means that the students do not understand the concepts of using them in a correct sentence. It proofs that the students were lack of knowledge about the morphological differences between first language learning and target language so that they made some mistakes regarding those three points.

On the other hand, three types of morphological interference have not been found in the data set. Those were of them are possessive ('s), participle (-ing and -ed), and comparative or superlative (-er or -est). It proofs that the students understood or mastered those types. If the students mastered the rules of morphology and the concepts of writing so that the students will not produce those types of mistakes. As a result, those three types are not taking part in mistakes on students' descriptive text, but it can be the gap for the next writer who is interested in doing such a study. For that reason, the other mistakes might be showing up on different topics

or different writing types on morphological site.

CONCLUSION

The primary question guiding this present research attempted to address one case which was types of English morphological features in which linguistic interference may take place. Overall, the findings of this research revealed that interference in the morphological field mostly occurs within certain morphological elements in which those items bear differences in terms of systems and rules governing in the languages and that constitute grounds for linguistic interference. From six types of morphological interference based on Politzer and Ramirez' theory, the writer only found three of them. These types encompass the morphological properties from the use of an article, plural marker, and simple past tense. From those types that have been found, it means that the students were lack understanding. Moreover, three types that have not been found were possessive, participle, and comparative or superlative adjectives. Significantly the students were mastering those types. Therefore, the mistake will not be committed by the students in their writing.

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