

Analysis of Spelling Errors in Vocabulary Writing at Second Grade Students of MA Miftahul Ulum Bettet

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Abstract

Spelling plays a crucial role in vocabulary mastery and writing accuracy, which are essential components of English language learning. However, many students persistently make spelling errors, particularly in vocabulary writing, due to limited understanding of English spelling conventions and inadequate instructional support. Although previous research has addressed common writing errors, specific attention to spelling errors in vocabulary remains insufficient. This study aims to identify the types of spelling errors and the contributing factors among second-year students at MA Miftahul Ulum Bettet, Pamekasan. Employing a qualitative research design with a case study approach, the researcher collected data through classroom observations, students' writing assignments, and structured interviews. The data were analyzed using Corder's (1974) error analysis model, which involves error identification, classification, explanation, and evaluation. The findings revealed four types of spelling errors: omission, addition, substitution, and transposition, with omission being the most frequent. Contributing factors identified include limited vocabulary knowledge, phonetic influence from the first language (L1), insufficient writing practice, and inadequate corrective feedback from teachers. The findings highlight that students tend to rely on phonetic spelling rather than correct orthographic forms. The study concludes that consistent writing practice, enhanced vocabulary input, and effective teacher feedback are essential for reducing spelling errors and improving students' overall English writing competence.

Keywords: *EFL students, error analysis, spelling error, vocabulary writing,*

INTRODUCTION

Language is an essential tool used globally to facilitate interaction, foster cooperation, and exchange understanding in daily life. According to Nasution (2022), language, as a communication tool, plays an integral role in human interaction, enabling individuals to convey ideas, desires, feelings, and experiences to others. This underscores that language is a system for communicating and expressing thoughts. Beyond daily interactions, language serves as a bridge for international cooperation in fields such as education, economy, and technology, acting as a conduit for global information exchange. Through language, humans can effectively communicate to achieve specific goals by transforming thoughts into coherent sentences. This highlights the critical role of language in sustaining global communication, fostering mutual understanding, and promoting appreciation among individuals. Therefore, strong language skills are vital in various local and global contexts.

In the era of globalization, the need for a unified international language has led to the prominence of English as a global language. English serves as the primary medium for international communication across diverse domains, including

education, business, and technology. It provides essential access to global knowledge and information, necessitating English proficiency worldwide. Consequently, countries, including Indonesia, mandate English language education in their institutions to equip students with the skills to master English and meet global demands.

In Indonesia, English is a compulsory subject from early childhood education to tertiary levels, preparing students for rapidly evolving global challenges. The English curriculum in Indonesia is designed to enhance language skills, cultural sensitivity, and global competence. This involves careful planning, structuring, and implementation to improve graduates' capabilities while addressing factors that support or hinder English education. According to Setiawati (2024) the English curriculum fosters global awareness, enhances critical thinking, and enables access to international education. Educators are tasked with training students to master the four core English skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—to achieve the curriculum's objectives.

Writing skills are a critical component of English mastery, serving as a means to express ideas, thoughts, and information systematically and clearly. Writing enhances students' understanding of language structure, expands vocabulary, and improves grammar. Nasution (2024) defines writing as the ability to communicate through written words, involving the expression of graphic symbols in a comprehensible language. In Indonesia's educational context, writing skills are a key parameter for assessing students' English proficiency. Moreover, English writing proficiency offers significant academic and professional advantages. Students with strong writing skills demonstrate better academic performance and creativity, which are crucial for their development. Jaja (2024) emphasizes that writing skills are essential for academic success, enabling students to articulate thoughts clearly and persuasively. Beyond education, these skills are vital for drafting formal documents, emails, and engaging in global digital communication. Thus, writing instruction, particularly in English, demands special attention in education.

However, a major challenge in developing English writing skills is the difficulty in spelling vocabulary correctly. Spelling errors often stem from a limited understanding of English spelling patterns. According to Reaves et al. (2022) and Siregar & Zainuddin (2023), insufficient exposure to diverse vocabulary contributes to spelling difficulties, as students may not encounter words frequently enough to memorize their correct forms. Unlike Indonesian, English spelling is not always phonetic, and misunderstandings of the relationship between writing foundations and accurate spelling can impair students' ability to recognize and recall vocabulary effectively. Thus, spelling mastery is integral to improving English vocabulary writing skills.

Spelling is a fundamental aspect of English learning, particularly in vocabulary acquisition. In writing, accurate spelling enables students to recognize and understand words correctly. Spelling involves conventionally decoding words in written form, requiring an understanding of the complex relationships between sounds and letters, phonics, phonemic awareness, and mental orthographic representations (Reaves et al., 2022) The disparity between English pronunciation and spelling often poses challenges, leading to errors in word recognition, particularly among students with limited vocabulary mastery. Common spelling

errors omission, addition, substitution, or transposition of letters -reflect gaps in understanding the connection between vocabulary and spelling.

Vocabulary is a foundational element for mastering English, supporting the development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Strong vocabulary mastery enables students to express ideas clearly, structurally, and in alignment with communication goals. Sadiq (2023) suggests that linking vocabulary to personal experiences and prior knowledge enhances retention and facilitates learning. In writing, vocabulary mastery involves selecting appropriate words for various contexts and understanding correct spelling. A robust vocabulary allows students to construct grammatically correct sentences, use relevant terms, and produce comprehensible writing.

The relationship between spelling and vocabulary mastery is critical in English learning. Spelling development is closely tied to vocabulary growth, as understanding word origins and morphological knowledge enhances spelling and vocabulary proficiency (Reaves et al., 2022). Accurate spelling helps students connect word sounds to their written forms, facilitating recognition and retention of new vocabulary. Conversely, strong vocabulary mastery bolsters students' ability to comprehend context during listening, despite pronunciation variations, enabling accurate spelling in writing. Thus, spelling proficiency not only improves writing skills but also enriches overall vocabulary mastery, supporting comprehensive English understanding and reducing spelling errors in vocabulary.

Despite this, many students in Indonesia exhibit English vocabulary mastery below national standards, resulting in incorrect spelling during written assessments. This observation is based on feedback from a teacher at MA Miftahul Ulum Bettet, Pamekasan, the research site for this study. To address this, the researcher aims to identify common spelling error patterns in students' English writing. Analyzing spelling errors is crucial for understanding these patterns and devising effective teaching solutions. The researcher examined vocabulary spelling errors in written tests prepared for 38 female students in the second-year IPA2 class, a group noted for frequent English writing errors. By identifying common error types, closely with prior research by Reaves et al. (2022), which underscores the critical interplay between phonemic awareness and orthographic knowledge in achieving precise spelling. This observation highlights the intricate cognitive processes involved in spelling acquisition and reinforces the need for targeted instructional strategies to bridge the gap between phonetic perception and orthographic accuracy. Teachers can design targeted strategies to enhance students' listening and writing skills, ultimately improving their English proficiency.

The research problems, based on the background provided, were formulated into the following questions:

1. What are the most common types of spelling errors made by second-year IPA2 students at MA Miftahul Ulum Bettet in vocabulary writing?
2. What are the factors contributing to spelling errors made by second-year IPA2 students at MA Miftahul Ulum Bettet in vocabulary writing?

METHOD

Research Design

In this study, the researchers employed a qualitative research approach with a case study design to facilitate the analysis of vocabulary spelling errors in English

learning in Pamekasan. Creswell (2014) states that a case study design enables researchers to understand, explore, and investigate an ongoing case more closely and derive detailed insights from it. Therefore, the use of qualitative methods with a case study approach is the most suitable choice for directly analyzing students' spelling errors in English vocabulary.

Research Setting and Participant

The research on analyzing English vocabulary spelling errors was conducted at MA Miftahul Ulum Bettet, Pamekasan, located in Bettet Village, Pamekasan Subdistrict and Regency. The participants in this study were 38 female students from the second-year IPA2 class, selected using purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a non-random sampling method in which the researcher selects samples based on specific characteristics relevant to the research objectives. Silvia (2019) argues that purposive sampling ensures that the selected samples provide relevant and in-depth information regarding the issue under investigation, specifically identifying the types of errors frequently made by students in English writing tasks.

Data Collection Method

To collect research data, the researcher conducted classroom direct observations twice to assess students' abilities use field note. Mirhosseini (2020) states that observation, as a data collection technique in educational research, involves gathering qualitative data through participation in real-life contexts, recording events, and documenting experiences. This method is highly effective for understanding language teaching and learning in authentic classroom settings. The researcher conducted two observations and did not pursue further observations, as the data obtained from these sessions had reached saturation. Subsequently, the researchers utilized documentation in the form of students' written work, specifically simple sentences such as those in the simple present tense, completed during writing classes based on the researchers' instructions. This task was designed to identify the types of errors students made in their writing. Lestari (2017) suggests that documentation is a data collection method in educational research used to gather information about students' academic performance. During data collection, the researcher invited one student for a structured interview face to face. Several questions were asked to explore the factors contributing to their errors in spelling English vocabulary as a foreign language. In this regard, the researcher employed structured interviews consisting of five validated questions aimed at identifying the factors causing these spelling errors. Bell (2022) argues that structured interviews are a standardized data collection technique in educational research that minimizes response variability. Interviews can be conducted in various formats, ensuring response consistency, which is crucial for reliable data analysis and interpretation in educational studies.

Data Analysis and Data Validity

After collecting data using various data collection techniques, the researchers proceeded to analyze the data using error analysis. According to Corder (1974), several steps were employed to analyze the data. First, the researcher

conducted data collection using multiple techniques to obtain the necessary error data for the study. Once the data were collected, the researcher identified errors to facilitate the process of classifying errors. This classification aided in organizing the data, making it easier to provide explanations. After classification, the researcher explained the errors and evaluated them to derive research findings. The purpose of this organization was to establish connections between various subjects and facilitate the extraction of meaningful insights during the data analysis phase. In this study, data validity was ensured through a triangulation process. This process verified the quality of the data, assessing whether the collected data were accurate, whether the data collection techniques were appropriate, and whether the timing of the research was precise.

RESULTS

What are the types of spelling errors most often made by students of second grade IPA2 MA Miftahul Ulum Bettet in writing vocabulary?

Types of errors in writing vocabulary

The research, conducted on February 13, 2025, focused on analyzing spelling errors in vocabulary writing among second-year IPA2 students at MA Miftahul Ulum Bettet, Pamekasan. Of the 38 students enrolled in the class, 35 participated in the study, as three were unable to attend due to illness during the administration of the written test.

This investigation adopted the error analysis framework proposed by Corder (1974), which delineates a systematic process encompassing the collection, identification, explication, and evaluation of errors. Within this framework, spelling errors were meticulously categorized into four principal types: omission, addition, substitution, and transposition, each reflecting distinct challenges in the students' orthographic proficiency. The study of 35 second-grade students from the IPA2 class at MA Miftahul Ulum Bettet identified four types of spelling errors, namely:

1. Omission Error

Omission is an error that occurs when a student fails to write one or more letters that should be present in a word. A total of 52 omission cases were identified in the written work of second-grade students at MA Miftahul Ulum Bettet, as presented in Table 1. The research findings are as follows:

Table 1. Frequency of omission error in second grade of IPA2 MA. Miftahul Ulum

NO.	INCORRECT	CORRECT
1.	Frend	Friend
2.	Becuse	Because
3.	Diferent	Different
4.	Enviroment	Environment
5.	Goverment	Government
6.	Adress	Address

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7.	Comitee	Committee
8.	Interesing	Interesting
9.	Wich	Which
10.	Finaly	Finally
11.	Oportunity	Opportunity
12.	Hapening	Happening
13.	Recomend	Recommend
14.	Diference	Difference
15.	Hapy	Happy
16.	Acomodation	Accommodation
17.	Concious	Conscious
18.	Thier	Their
19.	Acheive	Achieve
20.	Belive	Believe
21.	Recieve	Receive
22.	Ocassion	Occasion
23.	Privilage	Privilege
24.	Agreement	Agreement
25.	Departement	Department
26.	Governer	Governor
27.	Embaras	Embarrass
28.	Indpendence	Independence
29.	Lenguage	Language
30.	Calender	Calendar
31.	Begining	Beginning
32.	Persue	Pursue
33.	Writen	Written
34.	Hungery	Hungry
35.	Knowlege	Knowledge
36.	Dissappear	Disappear
37.	Ocasionaly	Occasionally
38.	Tought	Thought

39.	Definate	Definite
40.	Permanant	Permanent
41.	Remeber	Remember
42.	Strenght	Strength
43.	Arguement	Argument
44.	Goverance	Governance
45.	Enviromental	Environmental
46.	Aniversary	Anniversary
47.	Accesory	Accessory
48.	Imediately	Immediately
49.	Wether	Whether
50.	Seperate	Separate
51.	Interesed	Interested
52.	Succesful	Successful

2. Addition errors

Addition is a spelling error in which students insert unnecessary letters into a word. A total of 45 addition cases were identified in the written work of second-grade students at MA Miftahul Ulum Bettet, as presented in Table 2. The research findings are as follows:

Table 2. Frequency of addition error in second grade of IPA2 MA. Miftahul Ulum

NO.	INCORRECT	CORRECT
1.	Beautifull	Beautiful
2.	Familly	Family
3.	Happilly	Happily
4.	Succesfull	Successful
5.	Carefull	Careful
6.	Especiallly	Especially
7.	Financilly	Financially
8.	Quikly	Quickly
9.	Finaly	Finally
10.	Thankfull	Thankful
11.	Begginer	Beginner
12.	Runnning	Running

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13.	Plannning	Planning
14.	Writting	Writing
15.	Swimmming	Swimming
16.	Developement	Development
17.	Govermental	Governmental
18.	Chooosen	Chosen
19.	Remmember	Remember
20.	Enviromental	Environmental
21.	Controll	Control
22.	Accross	Across
23.	Tomorrow	Tomorrow
24.	Bussiness	Business
25.	Dissaster	Disaster
26.	Adressess	Addresses
27.	Agressive	Aggressive
28.	Possitive	Positive
29.	Aggree	Agree
30.	Comittee	Committee
31.	Emmigrate	Emigrate
32.	Immediately	Immediately
33.	Occassion	Occasion
34.	Oppinion	Opinion
35.	Proffesor	Professor
36.	Succesfully	Successfully
37.	Trully	Truly
38.	Usefull	Useful
40.	Skillfull	Skillful
41.	Respectfull	Respectful
42.	Wastefull	Wasteful
43.	Blissfull	Blissful
44.	Peacfull	Peaceful
45.	Fearfull	Fearful

3. Substitution Errors

Substitution is a type of error in which students replace a correct letter with an incorrect one. A total of 35 substitution cases were identified in the written work of second-grade students at MA Miftahul Ulum Bettet, as presented in Table 3. The research findings are as follows:

Table 3. Frequency of substitution error in second grade of IPA2 MA. Miftahul Ulum

NO.	INCORRECT	CORRECT
1.	Beouse	Because
2.	Divferent	Different
3.	Definate	Definite
4.	Recieve	Receive
5.	Acheive	Achieve
6.	Adrezz	Address
7.	Lenguaje	Language
8.	Toought	Thought
9.	Enfironment	Environment
10.	Goferment	Government
11.	Opportunity	Opportunity
12.	Interesding	Interesting
13.	Wiich	Which
14.	Celender	Calendar
15.	Thier	Their
16.	Conczious	Conscious
17.	Persue	Pursue
18.	Wridten	Written
19.	Commettee	Committee
20.	Vinally	Finally
21.	Knowledje	Knowledge
22.	Succezzful	Successful
23.	Immediately	Immediately
24.	Happi	Happy
25.	Recomment	Recommend
26.	Annifersary	Anniversary
27.	Accezzory	Accessory

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28.	Okkassion	Occasion
29.	Emberrass	Embarrass
30.	Governer	Governor
31.	Dipartment	Department
32.	Enfironmental	Environmental
33.	Strenggh	Strength
34.	Remimber	Remember
35.	Argumint	Argument

4. Transposition Errors

Transposition is an error in which students write letters in the incorrect order. A total of 11 transposition cases were recorded in the written work of second-grade students at MA Miftahul Ulum Bettet, as presented in Table 4. The research findings are as follows:

Table 4. Frequency of transposition error in second grade of IPA2 MA. Miftahul Ulum

NO.	INCORRECT	CORRECT
1.	Freind	Friend
2.	Studenst	Students
3.	Teh	The
4.	Form	From
5.	Plaese	Please
6.	Waht	What
7.	Lauhg	Laugh
8.	Helol	Hello
9.	Decied	Decide
10.	Heva	Have
11.	Watr	Wart

Data were gathered through an analysis of students' written compositions, specifically simple present tense sentences crafted during classroom exercises. The research design incorporated rigorous measures to ensure both validity and reliability, achieved through a meticulously planned approach to data collection and analysis. The analysis, grounded in the four error types, revealed that omission errors were the most frequent, totaling 52 instances, followed by addition errors with 45 instances, transposition errors with 35 instances, and substitution errors with 11 instances.

What are the factors causing spelling errors made by students of second grade IPA2 MA Miftahul Ulum Bettet in writing vocabulary?

Limited mastery of English vocabulary

Based on the structured interview conducted with a student from Class II IPA2 at MA Miftahul Ulum Bettet, the student stated that their mastery of English vocabulary is still very limited and is only acquired through classroom learning. As the result of following interview:

Extract 1

"I rarely read English texts outside of lessons, so I often forget how to spell the words." (Interview, February 13, 2025)

Influence of phonetics from native language

Based on the findings from the interview, one of the factors contributing to the students' errors in writing English vocabulary is the discrepancy in pronunciation. The students admitted to spelling English words in accordance with their pronunciation as perceived through the lens of the Indonesian language.

Extract 2

"I thought 'because' was written as 'becouse' since it sounds like that when pronounced." (Interview, February 13, 2025)

Lack of practice in writing English

This research further identified that a significant factor contributing to students' errors in English was the insufficient practice of writing. According to the students, opportunities to engage in English writing activities were scarce, with exercises typically confined to crafting a single, straightforward sentence.

Extract 3

"In English lessons, we are rarely asked to write at length; usually, it's just one sentence." (Interview, February 13, 2025)

Insufficient corrective feedback from teacher

This study found that the lack of teacher feedback also contributes significantly to the frequent errors in students' English writing. Students reported that teachers typically only mark errors without providing explanations the spelling mistakes made.

Extract 4

"When I make a writing mistake, the teacher just marks it as wrong but doesn't explain why it's incorrect or how it should be corrected." (Interview, February 13, 2025)

Collectively, these findings indicate that students' limited understanding of English phonetics, exacerbated by insufficient writing practice and inadequate instructional support, significantly contributes to their spelling difficulties. The reliance on phonetic-based spelling, influenced by their native language, coupled

with a lack of opportunities to engage with English vocabulary across diverse contexts, poses a substantial barrier to achieving orthographic accuracy.

Addressing these contributing factors is critical to enhancing students' writing proficiency and overall mastery of English vocabulary. By promoting greater exposure to varied linguistic resources, prioritizing writing as a core component of language instruction, and implementing systematic feedback mechanisms, educators can better equip students to overcome their spelling challenges. Such interventions not only hold the promise of improving students' orthographic competence but also establish a stronger foundation for their academic and professional success in an increasingly globalized world, where proficient English communication is paramount.

DISCUSSION

The research findings indicate that the most frequent spelling errors made by students of Class II IPA2 at MA Miftahul Ulum Bettet in writing English vocabulary are omission errors, followed by addition, substitution, and transposition errors. These findings reveal that students still face significant difficulties in understanding English spelling conventions, particularly when writing words with complex phonemes or those that do not align with pronunciation patterns in Indonesian. This result is consistent with Alhaysony's (2012) study, which states that differences between the writing systems of English and the students' native language are a primary cause of spelling errors. Furthermore, Coronado (2024) research reinforces that omission errors are the most dominant type of spelling mistakes in students' writing, followed by insertion, substitution, and transposition errors.

The factors contributing to these spelling errors include limited mastery of English vocabulary, the phonetic influence of the students' first language (Indonesian), insufficient practice in writing in English, and a lack of corrective feedback from teachers. These findings support Alhaysony's (2012) explanation that inadequate writing practice in English and low student motivation are major factors causing spelling errors. Additionally, Coronado (2024) study highlights that difficulties in pronunciation and the influence of the native language are key contributors to students' spelling mistakes. Therefore, to reduce spelling errors, a more intensive learning approach is needed, incorporating increased writing practice, expanded vocabulary input, and corrective feedback that not only identifies errors but also explains the reasons and provides accurate corrections.

CONCLUSION

Drawing upon the findings of the research concerning spelling errors in English vocabulary writing among second-year IPA2 students at MA Miftahul Ulum Bettet, it can be concluded that omission errors constitute the most prevalent type of mistake, followed by addition, substitution, and transposition errors. These errors collectively indicate that a significant proportion of students continue to grapple with recognizing and accurately reproducing correct English spellings. This challenge is likely attributable to limited exposure to English vocabulary and the phonetic disparities between Indonesian, their native language, and English, which fundamentally differ in their sound-to-letter correspondences.

The contributing factors underlying these spelling errors encompass several critical dimensions: limited vocabulary knowledge, phonetic interference from the students' first language, insufficient writing practice, and the absence of corrective feedback from teachers. These factors exert a profound influence on the students' learning processes, particularly in their ability to master the orthographic conventions essential for accurate spelling in English vocabulary writing. Each factor underscores a distinct yet interconnected barrier that hinders the students' development of proficient writing skills.

To address these challenges, the implementation of targeted instructional strategies is imperative. Such strategies should prioritize consistent writing practice to reinforce orthographic patterns, regular introduction of new vocabulary to expand lexical knowledge, and detailed corrective feedback from teachers that not only rectifies errors but also elucidates the rationale behind correct spellings. This approach is crucial to ensure that students not only acquire knowledge of proper orthographic forms but also develop a deeper understanding of the principles governing their accuracy. By fostering such a comprehensive learning environment, students' proficiency in spelling English vocabulary can be significantly enhanced, thereby bolstering their overall writing competence and equipping them with the linguistic skills necessary for academic and professional success.

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