

## Editing Linguistic Aspects in Academic Writing: A Case Study of History of Literature Papers at UNINDRA

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**Abstract.** This study investigates linguistic aspects in student paper writing through systematic error analysis in the History of Literature course. The research employed a qualitative descriptive approach with document analysis as the primary data collection method. Student papers were systematically examined to identify and categorise linguistic errors across multiple dimensions of academic writing. The analysis revealed a total of 649 linguistic errors distributed across nine categories. Spelling errors dominated with 295 occurrences (45.45%), indicating significant challenges in orthographic accuracy. Word choice errors ranked second with 70 instances (10.79%), followed by grammar errors with 63 occurrences (9.71%) and punctuation errors with 61 instances (9.40%). Sentence structure problems appeared 57 times (8.78%), whilst terminology errors occurred 40 times (6.16%). Affixation errors were identified 29 times (4.47%), cohesion and coherence issues 28 times (4.31%), and politeness/register errors only 6 times (0.92%). The findings demonstrate that surface-level linguistic features, particularly spelling and lexical selection, present the greatest challenges for students writing academic papers in literary studies. The high frequency of spelling errors despite available technological support suggests insufficient proofreading strategies and limited awareness of common orthographic patterns. Word choice and grammar errors indicate ongoing development in academic vocabulary and syntactic control. The relatively low occurrence of cohesion and register errors suggests reasonable competence in discourse organisation and rhetorical awareness. These findings have important pedagogical implications, highlighting the need for explicit instruction in orthographic conventions, strategic vocabulary development, and systematic editing practices. The study contributes valuable insights for designing targeted interventions to support students' academic writing development in literature courses.

**Keyword:** Editing Linguistic Aspects; Paper Writing; Error Analysis; Academic Writing; History of Literature

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## INTRODUCTION

Academic writing constitutes one of the most fundamental competencies that students must acquire throughout their higher education journey. It serves as the primary medium through which scholarly knowledge is constructed, disseminated, and evaluated within academic communities (Lea & Street, 1998). The ability to produce well-structured, linguistically accurate academic texts is considered an essential indicator of intellectual development and disciplinary enculturation (Hyland, 2004) ; (Liedtke, 2010). Scholars have consistently affirmed that academic writing is not merely a mechanical skill but a complex cognitive and sociocultural practice that involves negotiating disciplinary conventions, rhetorical (Hyland, 2002) norms, and linguistic resources (Canagarajah, 2011)). In recent decades, the expansion of higher education globally has brought increasing attention to the quality of student academic writing, particularly in contexts where English functions as a foreign or second language (Hinkel, 2020).

Students writing in a language other than their mother tongue face multifaceted challenges that manifest at various levels of linguistic organisation. Research in second language writing has documented persistent difficulties across orthographic, grammatical, lexical, and discursive dimensions (Ellis, 2018). These difficulties are particularly prominent in formal academic writing contexts, where adherence to genre conventions, disciplinary terminology, and linguistic precision is expected (Hyland, 2004). For English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students in particular, transitioning from informal communicative language use to the demands of academic discourse presents formidable obstacles (Tribble, 2014). Effective writing requires more than grammatical accuracy; it also demands cohesion and coherence throughout the text. Among the various elements that contribute to textual unity, cohesive devices serve as the most fundamental components and therefore warrant careful attention in the writing process. (TAHSİLDAR & YUSOFF, 2018). The growing integration of artificial intelligence tools into the academic writing process has further transformed the landscape of student writing, raising new questions about linguistic accuracy and authorial responsibility (Kim, 2025). Error analysis is part of applied linguistics that emerged in the 1960s. Its goal was to prove that learner errors do not only come from their native language, but also reflect common learning strategies. Error analysis was born as a response to contrastive analysis theory, which believed that second language learning mainly occurs through language transfer. This idea was rooted in behaviorist theory, which viewed language learning as a habit-forming process through stimulus and response. (Erdoğan, 2005). Error analysis focuses on how learners process and understand input from the target language through their cognitive abilities. In other words, the main goal of error analysis is to use learner errors as evidence to better understand the underlying processes involved in acquiring a second language. In this regard, proposes that error analysis can be divided into two main branches, namely theoretical error analysis and applied error analysis. (Keshavarz, 1997; Erdoğan, 2005). By categorising and quantifying errors across dimensions such as spelling, grammar, punctuation, word choice, sentence structure, cohesion, and register, researchers can identify patterns of difficulty that inform both pedagogical intervention and curriculum design (Hyland, 2004). Error analysis studies have been conducted across a wide range of educational levels and linguistic contexts, consistently revealing the systemic nature of certain error types and the complex interplay between first language interference, inadequate instruction, and insufficient editing practices (Strobl, 2019) Recent scholarship has extended error analysis frameworks to encompass digital and AI-mediated writing environments, where surface-level errors may be simultaneously reduced and transformed by technological assistance (Khalifa, 2024); (Song, 2023)

Within the Indonesian higher education context, the quality of student academic writing has attracted increasing scholarly attention. Indonesian students composing academic papers face a dual challenge: they must demonstrate competence not only in the English language, which functions as the predominant medium of global academic discourse, but also in Indonesian academic writing conventions that have their own orthographic, grammatical, and stylistic expectations governed by the Pedoman Umum Ejaan Bahasa Indonesia (PUEBI) (Utami, 2023); (Mahapatra, 2024). Studies conducted at Indonesian universities have documented widespread linguistic errors in student-produced texts, including spelling inconsistencies, grammatical inaccuracies, poor lexical selection, and weak cohesion (Huisman, 2018); (Teng, 2023). These findings reflect deeper challenges related to insufficient explicit instruction in academic writing conventions, limited exposure to model academic texts, and inadequate engagement with systematic proofreading and self-editing strategies (Fathi, 2026); (Nguyen, 2024). The persistence of these challenges across different academic disciplines calls for targeted investigation into specific course contexts in which academic paper production forms a core learning requirement (Lea & Street, 1998); (Lu, 2024).

The History of Literature course represents a particularly demanding academic writing context within Indonesian university programmes, as it requires students to synthesise historical knowledge, literary analysis, and formal academic prose simultaneously. Students enrolled in such courses are expected to produce seminar papers that demonstrate not only an understanding of literary periodisation, canonical texts, and authorial contributions but also the capacity to articulate these ideas with linguistic precision and scholarly register (Wallace, 2023) ; (Balagura, 2023). The genre demands of literature-historical academic papers include the appropriate use of academic vocabulary, accurate citation practices, logical paragraph development, and disciplinary terminological consistency (Flowerdew, 2000). These requirements place significant pressure on students whose linguistic resources are still developing and who may lack sufficient mentorship in the genre conventions of literary scholarship (Amirjalili, 2024). Editing, understood as both a cognitive process and a textual practice, plays a pivotal role in mediating between initial drafting and the production of a polished, error-free academic paper (Casal, 2023) ;(Kessler, 2012) ; (Jarrah, 2023).

Linguistic editing in academic writing encompasses a range of activities aimed at improving orthographic accuracy, grammatical correctness, lexical appropriacy, and discursive coherence. The editing process is increasingly recognised as a critical component of academic literacy development rather than a remedial afterthought (Yu, 2021); (Huisman, 2018). Systematic editing enables writers to identify and correct errors in spelling, punctuation, word choice, sentence structure, affixation, cohesion, and stylistic register the very categories that have been identified in previous error analysis research as most challenging for student writers (James, 1992). In the Indonesian academic context, evidence suggests that students frequently submit papers without adequate revision, resulting in recurring surface-level errors that compromise the overall quality of their scholarly output (Mahapatra, 2024). The integration of technological tools, including AI-powered writing assistants, has introduced new dimensions to the editing process, offering potential support for surface-level error correction while simultaneously raising concerns about authorial responsibility and the development of genuine linguistic competence (Cheng, 2025) ; (Tang, 2024). Understanding the specific types and frequencies of linguistic errors that persist despite available technological support is therefore a critical research priority (Golan, 2023).

Despite the growing body of research on academic writing errors in EFL and Indonesian higher education contexts, there remains a notable gap in studies that focus specifically on linguistic error analysis within History of Literature academic papers at the university level. Existing studies have tended to examine either general academic writing across disciplines or specific sub-skills such as grammatical competence or vocabulary use, without providing a comprehensive,

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multidimensional analysis of the full spectrum of linguistic errors encountered in literary-historical paper writing (Wallace, 2023); (Balagura, 2023); (Graybill, 2023). Furthermore, the literature offers limited insight into how error patterns manifest across different student groups working within the same course, and how systematic editing practices can be employed to address these patterns at scale (Aljuaid, 2024). This gap is particularly significant given that History of Literature is a mandatory course in many Indonesian English education programmes, serving as a site where students are expected to integrate substantial content knowledge with advanced academic writing skills (Hwang, 2023); (Miao, 2024). Addressing this gap is essential for developing evidence-based pedagogical interventions that support students' linguistic and academic development in literary studies contexts.

This study aims to investigate the types and frequencies of linguistic errors in student academic papers produced in the History of Literature course at Universitas Indraprasta PGRI (UNINDRA), Jakarta, Indonesia. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach with systematic document analysis, the study examines student papers across nine linguistic categories: spelling, punctuation, grammar, word choice, sentence structure, terminology, affixation, cohesion and coherence, and register or politeness. By providing a comprehensive error inventory and frequency distribution analysis, the study contributes empirically grounded insights for designing targeted linguistic editing interventions and for informing academic writing pedagogy within Indonesian higher education. The findings are expected to have significant implications for course design, faculty development, and the implementation of systematic proofreading and editing programmes that can meaningfully support students' progression toward greater academic writing proficiency.

## **METHOD**

### **1. Research Design**

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to investigate linguistic errors in student academic papers produced in the History of Literature course at Universitas Indraprasta PGRI (UNINDRA), Jakarta, Indonesia. A qualitative descriptive design was selected because it is particularly suited to the systematic identification, categorisation, and interpretation of naturally occurring textual phenomena, allowing the researchers to produce a detailed, empirically grounded account of the nature and distribution of linguistic errors without imposing experimental manipulations on the data. This orientation is consistent with (Lillis, 2008) argument that close engagement with authentic written texts rather than experimental elicitation provides the most ecologically valid basis for understanding the actual challenges writers face in academic contexts. As (Paltridge, 2004) observed, academic writing research benefits from designs that attend carefully to the situated nature of student texts, recognising that linguistic features cannot be evaluated independently of the disciplinary and institutional contexts in which they are produced. The methodological stance adopted here is therefore consistent with the analytical goals of error analysis research in academic writing contexts, where the aim is to describe and explain patterns of linguistic difficulty rather than to measure causal relationships.

### **2. Data Source and Participants**

The primary data source for this study consisted of student-authored academic papers submitted as course requirements in the History of Literature programme at UNINDRA. The papers were purposively selected to represent a range of student writing produced within this specific disciplinary context. Document analysis was adopted as the primary data collection method, enabling systematic examination of authentic written artefacts in their natural form. This approach aligns with Lea and (Lea & Street, 1998) academic literacies framework, which emphasises the importance of studying student writing as it occurs within the actual institutional and disciplinary contexts of higher education, rather than under artificially

controlled conditions. The use of existing student documents ensured that the linguistic features analysed reflected genuine academic writing behaviour rather than performance elicited under experimental conditions a methodological priority also underscored by (Lillis, 2003), who argued that authentic student texts reveal patterns of difficulty that are otherwise invisible to standardised assessment instruments.

### 3. Instrument and Data Collection

Data collection was conducted through systematic document analysis of the collected student papers. Each paper was examined in its entirety to identify and record all instances of linguistic deviation from established academic writing conventions. The researchers developed a structured analytical instrument based on a multi-dimensional error taxonomy encompassing nine distinct linguistic categories: (1) spelling, (2) word choice, (3) grammar, (4) punctuation, (5) sentence structure, (6) terminology, (7) affixation, (8) cohesion and coherence, and (9) register and politeness.

The selection of these nine categories reflects the multi-layered complexity of academic writing competence. (Biber, 2010) demonstrated that academic writing involves simultaneously managing elaboration, explicitness, and structural density dimensions that map directly onto the grammatical, lexical, and structural categories included in the present taxonomy. The inclusion of word choice and terminology is grounded in (Hinkel, 2020) analysis of vocabulary and grammar as foundational but persistently challenging components of L2 academic writing. The category of cohesion and coherence is theoretically informed by (Hyland, 2004) influential reappraisal of metadiscourse in academic writing, which showed that the texture of cohesion how propositions are logically linked and the reader is guided through an argument is a primary indicator of writing proficiency. The incorporation of register and politeness as a discrete analytical category draws on (Hyland, 2017) corpus-based finding that learners frequently misjudge the level of formality appropriate to academic discourse, as well as (Gilquin, 2008) identification of register miscalibration as one of the most pervasive, yet systematically underanalysed, error types in learner academic writing.

This taxonomy was constructed by synthesising established frameworks from error analysis literature, including contrastive analysis, interlanguage theory, and genre-based approaches, to ensure comprehensive coverage of the linguistic dimensions most relevant to academic writing in literary studies. The genre-based dimension of the taxonomy is consistent with (Hyland, 2008) contention that academic writing must be understood as a set of socially situated genre practices, each carrying specific linguistic expectations that EFL learners must explicitly learn. (Wingate, 2012) similarly argued that effective writing instruction and, by extension, effective error analysis must integrate attention to both language-level features and the broader genre conventions of the disciplinary community.

### 4. Data Analysis Procedure

The data analysis procedure followed a sequential, multi-stage process aligned with standard error analysis methodology. In the first stage, all student papers were read in full to gain an overall understanding of each text before detailed error identification commenced. In the second stage, each linguistic error was identified, extracted, and classified according to the nine-category taxonomy. Error classification was conducted by two independent coders to enhance the reliability and consistency of categorisation decisions; discrepancies were resolved through discussion and consensus. In the third stage, the frequency of errors in each category was tabulated to determine the distribution and relative prevalence of each error type across the entire dataset.

#### a. Error Identification

Each student paper was systematically reviewed sentence by sentence. Linguistic deviations from standard academic writing conventions were flagged and documented, with each instance recorded alongside the original erroneous text, the corrected form,

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and the assigned error category. This granular documentation ensured transparency and traceability in the analytical process. The decision to examine full texts rather than isolated sentences is theoretically consistent with (Lillis, 2008) methodological position that meaning in academic writing is produced at the level of discourse rather than at the level of the isolated sentence. (Fadda, 2012) has similarly demonstrated that difficulties in academic writing including those arising from L1 interference are most accurately identified when the full textual context is considered, because errors in structure, cohesion, and register only become apparent across extended stretches of prose. (Phakiti, 2011) further confirmed, in a study of Asian ESL postgraduate writers, that learners' academic writing difficulties cluster across multiple linguistic levels simultaneously, underscoring the necessity of a holistic, full-text approach to error identification.

#### b. Error Classification and Frequency Tabulation

Identified errors were classified into one of the nine predetermined categories. Following classification, frequency counts were computed for each error type to establish the overall distribution of linguistic difficulties across the corpus. Percentage values were calculated to facilitate comparison of error category prevalence, providing the quantitative basis for the descriptive analysis reported in the findings. The combination of qualitative classification with quantitative frequency tabulation is consistent with (Hyland, 2002) contention that a rigorous account of academic writing difficulties must attend simultaneously to the categorical nature of specific errors and to their distributional patterns across a corpus.

### 5. Trustworthiness

To ensure the credibility and dependability of the findings, several measures were implemented. Analyst triangulation was employed through the use of two independent coders, whose inter-rater agreement was assessed prior to finalising classifications. Detailed documentation of the coding process and decision criteria was maintained throughout the study to support confirmability. The naturalistic, document-based data source further enhanced the transferability of the findings, as the papers analysed represent authentic academic writing produced under standard course conditions at UNINDRA. These procedures collectively reflect (Lillis, 2008) call for rigorous methodological transparency in qualitative academic writing research, ensuring that analytical decisions are traceable, replicable, and grounded in the full complexity of the textual data.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

The systematic analysis of student academic papers submitted in the History of Literature course at Universitas Indraprasta PGRI (UNINDRA) yielded a corpus of **649 linguistic errors** distributed across nine distinct categories. These categories spanning spelling, word choice, grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, terminology, affixation, cohesion and coherence, and register/politeness provide a multi-dimensional picture of the linguistic challenges encountered by students when producing academic texts within a literary studies discipline. The overall distribution of errors is presented in **Table 1**.

**Table 1** Overall distribution of linguistic errors across nine categories

No.	Error Category	Error Code	Frequency (f)	%
1.	Spelling	EJ	295	45.45
2.	Word Choice	PK	70	10.79
3.	Grammar (Tata Bahasa)	TB	63	9.71

4.	Punctuation (Tanda Baca)	TP	61	9.40
5.	Sentence Structure	SK	57	8.78
6.	Terminology (Istilah)	IS	40	6.16
7.	Affixation (Imbuhan)	IM	29	4.47
8.	Cohesion and Coherence	KK	28	4.31
9.	Register and Politeness (Kesantunan)	KS	6	0.92
<b>Total</b>			<b>649</b>	<b>100.00</b>

### 1. Spelling Errors (f = 295; 45.45%)

Spelling errors constituted the single largest category of linguistic deviation in the corpus, accounting for 295 occurrences nearly half (45.45%) of all identified errors. This finding aligns with previous research on student academic writing in Indonesian higher education, where orthographic inaccuracies consistently rank as the most prevalent form of surface-level error. The dominance of this category suggests that, despite the availability of word-processing tools with automated spell-checking functionality, students continue to produce texts with substantial orthographic irregularities, pointing to insufficient proofreading strategies and a limited internalisation of standard spelling conventions.

The data reveal several recurrent sub-types of spelling error. The most frequent involved the inconsistent or incorrect writing of compound and prefixed words a known difficulty in Indonesian orthographic convention. For instance, the prefixed form *pramodern* was repeatedly written as *pra modern* (with an erroneous space) across 43 instances in a single paper, demonstrating how a single systematic misunderstanding of compounding rules can generate a disproportionate share of the error count. Similarly, students produced forms such as *so-sialis* and *meng-gunakan*, where hyphenation was incorrectly inserted within morphologically unified words. Typographical errors, including transposed letters (*sebagai* for *sebagai*; *Slaah* for *Salah*) and triple-vowel sequences (*kebangsaaan* for *kebangsaan*), constituted a further sub-cluster, suggesting hasty composition without systematic review.

Capitalisation errors formed a third distinct sub-type: proper nouns, geographical names, institutional titles, and the names of historical literary periods were frequently written in lower case. Examples include *indonesia* for *Indonesia*, *amir hamzah* for *Amir Hamzah*, and *penjajahan jepang* for *Penjajahan Jepang*. These errors indicate limited familiarity with the capitalisation rules encoded in *Pedoman Umum Ejaan Bahasa Indonesia (PUEBI)*. The high overall frequency of spelling errors, even in domains where correct forms are objectively verifiable, underscores the critical need for explicit instruction in orthographic conventions and the systematic integration of proofreading routines into the academic writing curriculum.

**Table 2** Examples of spelling errors identified in student papers

Code	Sub-type	Erroneous form	Corrected form	Source	Freq.
EJ-01	Compound word	"pra modern"	"pramodern"	Paper 1 (title, Ch. I-III)	43
EJ-04	Erroneous hyphenation	"so-sialis", "gunakan"	"meng- "sosialis", "menggunakan"	Paper (p. 7)	3
EJ-03	Typographical error	"sebagai"	"sebagai"	Paper (p. 3)	1
EJ	Triple vowel	"kebangsaaan"	"kebangsaan"	Paper (p. 12)	1

EJ-06	Capitalisation (country)	"indonesia"	"Indonesia"	Paper 1 (p. 14)	1
EJ-01	Capitalisation (event)	"penjajahan jepang"	"Penjajahan Jepang"	Paper 1 (pp. 2, 4)	2

## 2. Word Choice Errors (f = 70; 10.79%)

Word choice errors ranked second in frequency, comprising 70 instances (10.79%). These errors reflect difficulties in selecting lexically precise and contextually appropriate vocabulary, a challenge closely linked to the demands of academic register. The data reveal several distinct patterns: the use of informal or colloquial vocabulary where formal academic language is required; the substitution of contextually inappropriate near-synonyms; redundancy through near-equivalent word pairs; and the selection of words whose denotative meaning does not align with the intended referent.

Representative examples include the use of *apik* (colloquial, meaning 'neat' or 'nice') in place of formally appropriate alternatives such as *estetik* or *baik*; the erroneous form *saraf simbolisme* (literally 'nerve of symbolism') instead of *sarat simbolisme* ('laden with symbolism'); and the near-pleonastic pairing *fitnah dan insiniasi*, where either term alone is sufficient. In several cases, word choice errors also manifested as contextually inappropriate nominalisations: *tema-tempat* was used where *tema-tema* was required, suggesting a confusion between place-related and topic-related referents. These errors collectively indicate that students' active academic vocabulary remains insufficiently developed for the demands of literature-focused scholarly writing, pointing to the need for targeted vocabulary instruction foregrounding academic register and discipline-specific lexis.

## 3. Grammar Errors (f = 63; 9.71%)

Grammar errors constituted 63 instances (9.71%) of the total error count. Analysis of the data reveals that these errors cluster around several key structural phenomena: unclear subject-predicate relationships, non-standard use of connectives (particularly the non-standard form *yang dimana* in place of *yang* or *di mana*), inconsistent temporal reference, and the use of passive constructions where active voice is more appropriate or vice versa.

A particularly recurrent pattern involved the production of grammatically incomplete sentences in which the subject was absent or obscured: for example, "*Yang dimulai...*" was used as a free-standing clause where the grammatically complete alternative "*Hal ini dimulai...*" was required. Coordinated conjunctions were also frequently misapplied: the non-parallel structure "*bukan hanya... tetapi juga...*" was used where PUEBI prescribes the parallel form "*tidak hanya... tetapi juga...*". Inconsistency in the use of pronominal reference (e.g., alternating between *ia* and *dia* within the same text) further compromised grammatical coherence. These findings suggest that while students demonstrate a basic command of Indonesian syntax, they exhibit persistent difficulties with formal grammatical norms and the maintenance of structural consistency across extended discourse.

## 4. Punctuation Errors (f = 61; 9.40%)

Punctuation errors accounted for 61 instances (9.40%), forming the fourth most prevalent error category. The most common sub-type involved the incorrect placement or omission of commas, both in series constructions (where a comma before the final conjunct was systematically omitted: e.g., "*Muhammad Yamin, Sanusi Pane dan Armijn Pane*" instead of "*Muhammad Yamin, Sanusi Pane, dan Armijn Pane*") and in adverbial clauses preceding the main clause. The misuse of semicolons in place of coordinating conjunctions was also observed: in one instance, "*menunjukkan semangat hidup yang sangat kuat; metafora pada kata...*" required "...yang sangat kuat, sedangkan metafora pada kata...".

Inconsistent use of quotation marks including the mixing of single and double quotation marks within the same document was identified across multiple papers. Additionally,

the formatting of academic titles (journal articles, literary works) frequently departed from standard conventions: italics were omitted for foreign-language expressions and for titles of literary works such as novels and poetry collections, and the punctuation of in-text citations departed from standard citation style. The prevalence of punctuation errors, even in rule-governed contexts where conventions are clearly prescribed, reflects the need for explicit instruction in Indonesian punctuation norms as part of academic writing courses.

**5. Sentence Structure Errors (f = 57; 8.78%)**

Fifty-seven sentence structure errors (8.78%) were identified across the corpus. The dominant sub-type involved excessively long or structurally unwieldy sentences containing multiple subordinate clauses stacked without adequate grammatical scaffolding. For example, one paper produced the following construction: "Novel Atheis karya Achdiat Karta Mihardja adalah salah satu karya sastra Indonesia modern yang menggambarkan perjuangan batin manusia di tengah perubahan sosial dan perkembangan pemikiran zaman," which inappropriately compresses two propositions into a single clause and would be more clearly expressed as two separate sentences.

Redundancy and unnecessary repetition were also prominent: phrases such as "menerus menyerang" (where "terus menyerang" is the correct form), and the doubled occurrence of "terkenal dan terkenal", indicate insufficient attention to lexical economy during revision. Parallelism errors where coordinated elements failed to maintain structural symmetry were additionally noted. Sentence structure errors are significant because they affect not only surface grammaticality but also the clarity and cogency of academic argumentation, suggesting that students require explicit instruction in syntactic condensation and the management of complex sentence architecture.

**6. Terminology Errors (f = 40; 6.16%)**

Terminology errors totalled 40 instances (6.16%). These errors involved the inconsistent, imprecise, or non-standard use of discipline-specific terms. Three sub-patterns were identified in the data. First, orthographic inconsistency in the rendering of established literary-historical terms: for instance, "Poedjangga Baroe" and "Poejangga Baroe" were used interchangeably within the same paper, compromising the scholarly precision expected in literary history writing. Second, the use of terms without appropriate definitional scaffolding: the abbreviation IPTEKS (Ilmu Pengetahuan, Teknologi, dan Seni) appeared without prior explanation, while the term "Arab Melayu (Arab Pegon)" was used without clarification of the distinction between the two designations. Third, the use of technically imprecise terms within a literary studies context: for example, "simbol-simbol" was used where the more precise literary-critical term "simbolisme" would be appropriate. These errors reflect a gap between students' general understanding of literary concepts and their command of the technical metalanguage required for discipline-specific academic writing.

**7. Affixation Errors (f = 29; 4.47%)**

Affixation errors comprised 29 instances (4.47%). The most frequent sub-type involved incorrect morphophonemic realisation of the active prefix me-N-: for example, "menghasilkan" was produced instead of the correctly formed "menghasilkkan", and "mempengaruhi" appeared where "memengaruhi" is required by current standard Indonesian orthographic convention. A second sub-type involved the inappropriate separation of prefix from stem, producing non-standard forms such as "Di pengaruhi" and "Di perkenalkan" where "dipengaruhi" and "diperkenalkan" are correct. These errors, whilst lower in absolute frequency, are significant in that they indicate persistent confusion between the preposition di (written separately) and the verbal passive prefix di- (written as part of the word) a distinction that is fundamental to standard Indonesian morphology and orthography.

### 8. Cohesion and Coherence Errors (f = 28; 4.31%)

Cohesion and coherence errors totalled 28 instances (4.31%). Although relatively lower in frequency compared to surface-level error categories, these errors are disproportionately impactful on the overall quality of academic discourse because they disrupt the logical flow and organisational integrity of the text. The most common sub-type involved abrupt thematic transitions between paragraphs what may be termed 'idea jumps' where information from a new conceptual domain was introduced without adequate transitional scaffolding. A representative example occurred in a paper on Hindu-Buddhist literary heritage, where the narrative shifted directly from "Di era Majapahit..." to "Dengan datangnya Islam..." without a bridging sentence establishing the chronological and conceptual relationship between the two periods.

Pronoun reference errors also contributed to cohesion breakdown: in several instances, the demonstrative pronoun "ini" was used without a clear antecedent, producing referential ambiguity. Additionally, content repetition where entire paragraphs or substantial portions of text appeared more than once within the same paper was identified in multiple cases, reflecting poor planning and insufficient revision. These findings are consistent with (Hyland, 2004) analysis of metadiscourse in academic writing, which established that the management of cohesive texture is a primary indicator of writing proficiency, and that learners frequently struggle to produce the discourse-level connectivity expected in scholarly texts.

### 9. Register and Politeness Errors (f = 6; 0.92%)

Register and politeness errors were the least frequent category, comprising only 6 instances (0.92%). This low frequency might suggest adequate awareness of academic register conventions; however, the specific nature of the errors identified is instructive. All instances involved the use of inappropriately informal or overly personal language in formal academic sections most notably in preface sections (kata pengantar), where first-person expressions such as "Kami sangat mengharapkan kritik dan saran" were used instead of the formally appropriate "Penulis mengharapkan kritik dan saran yang membangun." Similarly, the informal phrase "tanpa takut mati" appeared in literary analysis, where the register-appropriate equivalent "tanpa rasa takut menghadapi kematian" was required. Although these errors are rare, they indicate that students have not fully internalised the formal register conventions that distinguish scholarly writing from informal communication, a finding that corroborates (Hyland, 2017) observation that learner academic writers frequently misjudge the appropriate level of formality for specific textual sections.

## **Discussion**

The findings of this study provide a comprehensive, empirically grounded account of the linguistic challenges facing students in a History of Literature course at UNINDRA. The overall error distribution heavily weighted towards spelling (45.45%) and word choice (10.79%), with grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure occupying the mid-frequency range, and affixation, cohesion, and register forming the lower tier reveals a clear hierarchy of difficulty that has important implications for both theory and pedagogy.

The dominance of spelling errors is theoretically significant because it suggests that surface-level orthographic challenges constitute the primary barrier to linguistic accuracy in this writing context, even for students writing in their first language. This finding challenges the assumption sometimes implicit in L1 writing instruction that native speakers have effectively internalised the orthographic conventions of their language prior to entering higher education. On the contrary, the data demonstrate that Indonesian students at university level continue to produce systematic orthographic errors, particularly in domains involving compound words, prefixation, and capitalisation, which are governed by complex rules that may not have been explicitly taught or consistently practised in prior educational stages.

The second-ranked category word choice points to a vocabulary dimension of difficulty that is closely related to students' exposure to academic and discipline-specific language. Literature-course writing demands not only general academic vocabulary but also a specialist metalanguage for discussing literary forms, historical periods, and critical concepts. The data reveal that students frequently resort to informal or imprecise lexis in domains where technical terms are required, suggesting that vocabulary instruction within literature courses should include explicit attention to the academic and critical registers of literary discourse.

The relatively high frequency of grammar and punctuation errors, each approaching 10% of the total, indicates that beyond the surface level of spelling, students face substantive difficulties with the formal structural conventions that govern Indonesian academic prose. Grammar errors particularly those involving subject clarity, connective appropriateness, and structural parallelism directly impair the logical coherence of argumentation. Punctuation errors, though seemingly mechanical, similarly affect the readability and rhetorical effectiveness of academic texts. Together, these two categories suggest that rule-governed formal conventions remain insufficiently automatised for many students, reinforcing the need for explicit and systematic instruction in Indonesian academic grammar and punctuation.

The lower frequency of cohesion and register errors is noteworthy but should not be interpreted as evidence of proficiency in these domains. Rather, these errors may be underrepresented because they are more difficult to identify through sentence-level analysis and tend to manifest across extended passages rather than at the level of the individual sentence. The cohesion errors that were identified including abrupt thematic transitions and unclear referential chains are particularly consequential for academic writing quality, given that the capacity to guide a reader coherently through a complex argument is a defining feature of scholarly discourse.

Taken together, the findings support a model of academic writing development in which surface-level competencies (orthographic accuracy, vocabulary selection) and structural competencies (grammar, punctuation, sentence construction) represent the primary foci for pedagogical intervention, while discourse-level competencies (cohesion, register) represent a secondary but equally important area of development. This multi-tiered perspective is consistent with (Biber, 2010) characterisation of academic writing as simultaneously managing elaboration, explicitness, and structural density, and with (Hinkel, 2020) emphasis on vocabulary and grammar as foundational but persistently challenging components of academic writing.

The pedagogical implications of these findings are substantial. Explicit instruction in Indonesian orthographic conventions particularly the rules governing compound words, prefixation, capitalisation, and the distinction between the preposition *di* and the passive prefix *di-* should be systematically integrated into academic writing curricula. Vocabulary development activities that foreground academic and discipline-specific register, including systematic exposure to the metalanguage of literary criticism, are equally warranted. Grammar and punctuation instruction should move beyond implicit correction to explicit, rule-based teaching of the conventions most frequently violated in student papers. At the discourse level, activities that develop students' ability to construct cohesive transitions, manage referential chains, and calibrate register appropriateness for different textual sections would address the less frequent but disproportionately impactful errors identified in the higher-tier categories. Finally, the systematic integration of structured editing and proofreading practices into the writing process rather than treating revision as an optional afterthought would address the full range of error categories identified, from orthographic surface errors to discourse-level structural weaknesses.

**Table 3** Summary of pedagogical implications by error category

Error category	Frequency (%)	Recommended pedagogical intervention
Spelling	295 (45.45%)	Explicit instruction in PUEBI compound-word, capitalisation, and hyphenation rules; integration of systematic proofreading routines
Word choice	70 (10.79%)	Targeted academic vocabulary development; exposure to discipline-specific literary metalanguage
Grammar	63 (9.71%)	Rule-based instruction in subject clarity, connective selection, and parallel structures in academic prose
Punctuation	61 (9.40%)	Explicit teaching of Indonesian academic punctuation norms; practice with citation format conventions
Sentence structure	57 (8.78%)	Instruction in syntactic economy; practice in sentence-splitting and parallel structure construction
Terminology	40 (6.16%)	Explicit teaching of discipline-specific terminology; modelling of definitional scaffolding for technical terms
Affixation	29 (4.47%)	Targeted morphophonemic instruction on me-N-prefixation and di- (preposition vs. prefix) distinction
Cohesion & coherence	28 (4.31%)	Training in transitional devices, referential cohesion, and multi-paragraph argument structure
Register & politeness	6 (0.92%)	Awareness-raising activities on formal academic register; section-specific register modelling

## CONCLUSION

This study has provided a detailed, empirically grounded analysis of the linguistic errors present in History of Literature student papers at Universitas Indraprasta PGRI (UNINDRA). Through the systematic application of a nine-category error taxonomy to a corpus of 649 identified errors, the study has demonstrated that spelling errors constitute the dominant challenge (45.45%), followed by word choice (10.79%), grammar (9.71%), punctuation (9.40%), and sentence structure (8.78%). Errors in terminology (6.16%), affixation (4.47%), cohesion and coherence (4.31%), and register and politeness (0.92%) complete the distribution.

These findings carry important theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, they demonstrate that academic writing difficulties in Indonesian higher education are not confined to surface orthography but extend across multiple linguistic dimensions simultaneously, necessitating multi-category analytical frameworks that can capture this complexity. Practically, the findings provide a granular basis for the design of targeted writing instruction that addresses the specific error types most prevalent in literature-course academic writing. The study thus contributes to the evidence base for writing pedagogy in Indonesian higher education, supporting the argument that systematic, explicit instruction in academic writing conventions integrated with structured editing practices is essential for developing students' capacity to produce linguistically accurate and rhetorically effective scholarly texts in literary studies.

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