

Analysis of Language Errors in News on Tribun Timur.com: Morphology

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ABSTRACT

This research employs a qualitative descriptive method aimed at analyzing spelling and morphological errors in online news articles published by Tribun Timur.com, specifically the Tribun Sidrap edition dated February 3, 2025. The study focuses on language errors involving the use of letters, word formation, affixation, punctuation, and other elements related to the Indonesian Spelling System (EYD) Edition V. A total of 25 news articles were selected purposively as the data source. The data were collected through reading, note-taking, and documentation techniques, and analyzed using data reduction, classification, and interpretation procedures. The findings reveal several types of language errors, including seven errors in the use of capital letters, three italicization errors, five-word formation errors, nine affixation mistakes, five hyphenation or compound word errors, one error in preposition use, three numerical/punctuation issues, and two comma-related punctuation errors. These mistakes suggest a lack of adherence to standardized Indonesian language rules in the media, which could affect the credibility of news articles and influence public language habits. The study concludes that consistent application of EYD rules is essential to improve the quality of language in online news writing. It recommends that journalists and editors implement rigorous editing practices to reduce errors and promote accurate language use. Furthermore, future research is encouraged to explore broader linguistic aspects such as syntactic and semantic errors in various media formats to support national language development and public literacy.

Keywords: Morphological Errors; Spelling Accuracy; Online News Language

INTRODUCTION

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach. The aim of this research is to identify spelling errors, particularly in the use of letters, word writing, and

punctuation marks. The data in this study consists of words or sentences containing spelling errors. The news articles from *Tribun Timur.com*, specifically from the *Tribun Sidrap* edition dated February 3, 2025, were used, with a total of 25 news articles analyzed. The data collection techniques employed in this study are reading, noting, and documentation techniques. The data analysis techniques used include data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Language is the primary tool for humans to think, communicate, and express themselves. In social life, language serves as a means of social interaction, allowing people to understand each other, convey ideas, and build and maintain social relationships. Language competence includes not only speaking skills but also listening, reading, and writing skills. These four skills are interconnected and form an integral part of overall language proficiency. Therefore, effective communication is greatly influenced by a person's ability to use language correctly and appropriately.

Indonesian, as the national language and the official language of the country, plays a strategic role in uniting the diverse cultures and ethnicities in Indonesia. In the context of public communication, especially in the digital age, the use of proper Indonesian is becoming increasingly important. This is because Indonesian is not only used in direct interpersonal communication but also serves as the primary medium for information dissemination through mass media, both print and online. Mass media has a significant influence in shaping public opinion and influencing the way people view various issues. Therefore, the use of language in mass media should not only be communicative but also adhere to grammatical rules so that the message conveyed is not misunderstood. However, in practice, the use of Indonesian in mass media is not always in accordance with the established norms and rules. Language errors, both in oral and written forms, are still frequently found. These errors can include spelling mistakes, word choices, sentence structure, as well as morphological and syntactic errors. Systematic and recurring language errors in the mass media can lead to the formation of deviant language patterns in society. As consumers of information, the public may become accustomed to incorrect forms of language, which over time can hinder efforts to promote the correct and proper use of the Indonesian language.

One type of error commonly found in mass media news reports is morphological errors. Morphology is the branch of linguistics that studies the internal structure of words and word formation processes, such as affixation (prefixing, suffixing), reduplication (repetition), and compounding (combining words). Errors in morphology can cause changes in meaning, confusion in message interpretation, and even disrupt the cohesion and coherence of a text. These errors are often overlooked because, at first glance, they do not always affect reading fluency, but upon closer examination, they can impact the accuracy of meaning and the aesthetic quality of language.

Tribun-Timur.com is one of the popular online news portals in South Sulawesi and West Sulawesi. With a wide readership and high publication frequency, this media

outlet plays a vital role in providing information to the public. However, based on preliminary observations of several news articles on this site, a number of noticeable language errors were found, particularly in morphology and spelling. If these errors are not analyzed and corrected, they could potentially diminish the quality of information and the credibility of the media as a trusted source of information.

This phenomenon is important to study scientifically to identify the types of language errors that occur and the factors underlying them. Research on language errors in mass media is not only significant from a linguistic perspective but also relevant from the standpoint of education, culture, and public policy. By understanding the types of errors and their causes, recommendations for improvement can be provided, which would be beneficial for journalists, editors, and media practitioners in improving their language proficiency. Furthermore, this research is expected to contribute to the language literacy of the Indonesian public, particularly in distinguishing between correct and deviant language forms. With increased awareness of proper language use, the quality of public communication will also improve. This aligns with the government's and linguistic institutions' efforts to nurture and develop the Indonesian language so that it remains relevant and adaptable to contemporary developments while preserving its rules and identity as the official language of the country.

Based on this background, this study focuses on the analysis of language errors found in news articles published by *Tribun-Timur.com*, with an emphasis on the morphological aspect. The research problem is formulated as follows: "What are the types of morphological errors found in the online news articles of *Tribun-Timur.com*?" The objective of this study is to identify and describe morphological errors in the news on *Tribun-Timur.com*, as well as provide a detailed linguistic analysis of the types and impact of these errors. Thus, this research is expected to serve as an evaluation tool for the use of Indonesian in online media and become a reference for applied linguistic studies, particularly in the fields of morphology and language in mass media.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Language plays a fundamental role in communication, enabling individuals to express ideas, emotions, and concepts. As a social tool, it facilitates interaction, mutual understanding, and the construction of relationships. In a broader context, language serves not only as a means of communication but also as a representation of cultural identity and societal values (Crystal, 2003). Effective language use is crucial in various domains, including media, education, and governance, where clarity and accuracy in communication can significantly impact the quality of information and the audience's comprehension. The study of language errors, especially in written form, has been a central topic in linguistics, with a particular focus on how these errors affect communication. One aspect of language errors that is commonly explored is orthographic errors, which involve mistakes in spelling,

punctuation, and capitalization. These errors can influence the readability of a text and potentially alter its meaning (Brown, 2012). In the context of mass media, such errors can affect the credibility of the media outlet, as audiences may perceive these mistakes as a lack of professionalism. The impact of orthographic errors in media communication can lead to confusion and misinterpretation, undermining the efficacy of the message being conveyed.

Morphological errors, which refer to mistakes in the formation of words, are another significant area of concern. Morphology, as a branch of linguistics, examines the structure of words and how they are formed through processes such as affixation, compounding, and reduplication. Morphological errors can distort the intended meaning of a message, making it difficult for the audience to interpret the information accurately (Spencer, 1991). These errors are often overlooked in the editing process, especially when they do not directly affect the grammatical structure of a sentence. However, they can lead to inconsistencies and confusion in understanding, especially when the audience is unfamiliar with the incorrect forms. The role of media in shaping public opinion has been widely studied, with research highlighting the importance of accurate and clear language in news reporting. In particular, the use of correct spelling and grammar is vital in ensuring that the message is communicated effectively and that the audience can trust the information being presented (Gee, 2014). Mass media, as a powerful tool for information dissemination, carries the responsibility of upholding linguistic standards to maintain public trust. Any deviations from these standards, whether in spelling, word usage, or morphology, can diminish the authority of the media and lead to a loss of credibility among the audience. Previous studies have also examined the effects of language errors in media on language acquisition and public literacy. Studies show that frequent exposure to incorrect language forms in the media can influence how individuals perceive and use language in their daily lives (Pennycook, 2007). In educational settings, students may begin to adopt the erroneous forms seen in media, which can lead to a decline in language proficiency. Therefore, it is crucial to address language errors in mass media, not only to maintain the integrity of communication but also to ensure that the public is exposed to correct linguistic forms.

In the Indonesian context, several studies have investigated the quality of language use in mass media, particularly focusing on the application of Indonesian grammar and spelling rules. Research has highlighted that despite efforts to standardize the language, errors in both the written and spoken forms of Indonesian are still prevalent in media reporting (Hasibuan, 2016). These errors, including morphological mistakes, can have a negative impact on the language standards that are taught in schools and universities. Consequently, studies suggest that a more comprehensive approach to language education and media literacy is necessary to ensure that the public and media professionals are aware of the importance of using language correctly in all forms of communication. By reviewing the existing literature, it becomes clear that while the study of language errors in media is not new, it remains an essential area of research. In particular, the focus on

morphological errors is crucial for understanding the nuances of language in media and how these errors can influence communication. This research aims to contribute to this body of knowledge by specifically examining the morphological errors found in news articles on *Tribun-Timur.com* and analyzing their impact on the effectiveness of the communication.

METHOD

Design and Sample

This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive design, aiming to provide a detailed description of language errors, particularly in spelling, found in online news articles. The data source consists of 25 news articles published in the *Tribun Timur Sidrap* edition from February 1–25, 2025. These articles were selected using purposive sampling based on the presence of potential spelling errors. The focus of the analysis includes mistakes in the use of letters, word formation, and punctuation marks, as guided by the Indonesian Spelling System (EYD) Edition V, regulated under the Decree of the Head of the Language Agency No. 0321/I/BS.00.00/2021.

Instruments and Procedures

Data collection was conducted using the reading and note-taking methods. The researcher thoroughly read each article and recorded sections that contained spelling errors. In addition, documentation techniques were applied by taking screenshots of the relevant article parts as supporting evidence. To enhance the validity of the data, theoretical triangulation was employed by comparing the findings with relevant linguistic theories and official language guidelines.

Data Analysis

The data analysis in this study was carried out using a qualitative method and involved three main stages. The first stage was data collection, where the researcher identified and compiled a corpus of texts containing spelling and morphological errors from the selected news articles. In the second stage, data reduction was conducted by categorizing and organizing the identified errors into specific types, such as errors in capitalization, affixation, and punctuation. The third stage involved data presentation and conclusion drawing, where the findings were presented in both narrative form and tables to illustrate the frequency and types of language errors discovered. The overall purpose of this analysis was to provide a comprehensive overview of common language errors in online media and to offer constructive recommendations for improving the accuracy and standardization of Indonesian language usage, particularly in journalistic writing.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to identify and analyze spelling and morphological errors found in 25 news articles published by *Tribun-Timur.com*, particularly those from the *Tribun Sidrap* edition dated February 1–25, 2025. The study emphasizes errors that deviate from the Indonesian Spelling System (EYD) Edition V, including misuse of capital letters, italicization, word formation, affixation, hyphenation, and punctuation. The analysis is structured thematically, beginning with the most frequently observed error types and progressing to those found less commonly.

Capitalization Errors

One of the most common types of spelling errors found in the articles was the misuse of capital letters. In the context of the Indonesian language, capitalization rules are regulated in the EYD and generally apply to proper nouns, titles, the beginning of sentences, and specific place names. Despite these well-defined rules, many violations were identified in the articles reviewed.

Unnecessary Capitalization

Several words were capitalized unnecessarily, particularly common nouns or adjectives that should have remained in lowercase. Examples include words like "*Penyesuaian*" and "*BBM*", which were written in capital letters despite not functioning as proper nouns in their sentence contexts. Such capitalization could mislead readers to interpret the words as acronyms or specific names, thereby affecting the clarity of the message.

Inconsistent Use of Capitalization in Proper Nouns

Another observed issue was inconsistent capitalization in the writing of geographic names. The word "*Sulsel*" appeared in one sentence in all uppercase letters and in another sentence with only the first letter capitalized, such as "*sulsel*". Both forms conflict with the standard practice of writing geographic names with initial capitals (e.g., *Sulsel* for *Sulawesi Selatan*). Furthermore, instances of "*Sulawesi Selatan*" written in all caps or entirely lowercase were also found, demonstrating inconsistent editorial practices.

Capitalization After Colons

The articles frequently included colons following introductory phrases or labels (e.g., "*Pengantar:*"), after which the next word was capitalized, regardless of whether it initiated a complete sentence. According to EYD rules, words following a colon should not begin with capital letters unless they start a full sentence. Violating this rule can compromise grammatical consistency and reader comprehension. These errors suggest a general lack of adherence to standardized capitalization rules and highlight the need for greater editorial oversight.

Italicization Errors

Errors involving italicization also appeared frequently, particularly in the use of foreign words and culturally specific terms. According to Indonesian writing conventions, italicization is reserved for foreign words that have not been absorbed into the Indonesian lexicon, as well as scientific names or expressions borrowed from other languages.

Misuse of Italics on Local Terms

Several Arabic and cultural phrases, such as "*Arak-arakan Dewa*", were italicized in the news articles, even though these terms are considered to be familiar or commonly used in the Indonesian context. The misuse of italics in such cases creates confusion and could suggest that the words are either foreign or specialized, even when they are not.

Lack of Italics for Actual Foreign Words

Conversely, some actual foreign words particularly in English and Arabic—were not italicized where appropriate. This further reflects inconsistencies in the application of formatting conventions. Failure to italicize foreign words reduces typographical clarity and may hinder comprehension for readers unfamiliar with those terms. This category of errors reveals a need for clear editorial policies and training in typography and language rules for digital publication formats.

Word Formation and Affixation Errors

Errors in word formation and affixation were also prominent throughout the articles. These types of mistakes fall within the broader field of morphological analysis and can significantly alter the meaning or clarity of a sentence.

Incorrect Place Names

A recurring error involved the place name "*Billa*", which was incorrectly written as "*Bila*" in several articles. This substitution, while seemingly minor, alters the reference entirely and may mislead readers who are unfamiliar with local geography. Proper place names are critical in news reporting, as they provide geographic context and factual accuracy.

Use of Incorrect Lexical Variants

Another frequent issue was the substitution of the term "*Cindera Mata Lokal*" instead of the correct form "*Cendera Mata Lokal*". This incorrect variant is commonly found in informal speech and writing but should be avoided in formal

news contexts. Its presence in professional articles demonstrates a gap between colloquial usage and standard editorial practices.

Affixation Errors

Errors in prefix and suffix use were also documented. For instance, phrases like "*melakukan penyesuaian harga*" and "*diperkirakan terjadi*" contained inconsistencies in the application of affixes. The affix "*di-*" in "*diperkirakan*" was at times misplaced or used when an active voice was needed. This reflects a misunderstanding of voice and verb forms in formal written Indonesian, which could confuse readers or alter the sentence's intended tone. Improper word formation and affixation not only compromise linguistic integrity but also diminish the credibility of the reporting institution.

Punctuation and Hyphenation Errors

Errors involving punctuation and hyphenation were found across multiple articles. Although punctuation may appear minor, it plays a critical role in guiding readers through sentence structure and enhancing the coherence of information.

Unnecessary Colons

Some articles used colons where none were needed, such as after short introductory expressions or labels. For example, the word "*Pengantar:*" was frequently followed by a colon even when not succeeded by a complete clause. Such usage reflects poor understanding of syntactic rules and contributes to mechanical inconsistency across articles.

Hyphenation Errors

Inconsistencies in the hyphenation of terms such as "*Rp 135*" were also noted. In some cases, the lack of hyphenation or appropriate spacing between numerical values and currency signs disrupted the visual flow of the sentence. Readers may find such formatting confusing, particularly when dealing with financial data where clarity is essential.

Comma Misuse

Several cases of comma misuse were recorded, including missing commas in compound or complex sentences, and the inclusion of unnecessary commas in short phrases. These errors, though subtle, can affect the rhythm and clarity of the text. When punctuation is misused repeatedly, it contributes to a degraded reading experience and reduces the professionalism of the content. These findings underline the necessity of consistent punctuation guidelines and editorial standards, especially in journalistic writing where accuracy and readability are paramount.

To quantify the occurrence of each error type, the research categorized and tallied the number of instances across all 25 articles. The results are summarized below:

Type of Error	Frequency
Capital Letter Usage Errors	7
Italicization Errors	3
Incorrect Word Formation	5
Incorrect Affixation	9
Hyphenation Errors	5
Incorrect Prepositions	1
Numeric and Punctuation Errors	3
Comma Misuse	2

This table shows that affixation errors were the most frequent, followed by capitalization and word formation errors. While some errors may seem minor individually, the accumulation of these mistakes in professional reporting settings can affect both reader trust and media credibility.

The findings of this study indicate the presence of various spelling and morphological errors in 25 online news articles published by *Tribun-Timur.com*. These errors—ranging from misuse of capital letters, improper italicization, incorrect word formation, affixation mistakes, to errors in punctuation and hyphenation—reflect both technical oversight and deeper systemic issues in editorial quality and language competence. These results are consistent with previous research that highlights persistent language inaccuracies in mass media, which, when left unaddressed, can negatively impact the quality of public communication and erode linguistic standards. Studies by Jasmani (2021) and Winata (2019) have similarly noted that repeated spelling and grammatical mistakes in journalistic writing diminish not only the professionalism of the media but also influence how readers perceive and adopt language usage in everyday contexts.

Capitalization errors were among the most frequent issues found in this study. Words such as "Penyesuaian" and acronyms like "BBM" were capitalized unnecessarily, while place names such as "Sulsel" and "Sulawesi Selatan" were inconsistently written in lowercase or full capitals. Such inconsistencies can cause confusion and reduce the formality of journalistic content. This echoes findings by Nisa (2018) and Radiatullah (2021), who observed that errors in capitalization were among the most frequent orthographic violations in Indonesian media. Misuse of

capital letters disrupts sentence flow, introduces ambiguity, and can even alter meaning. In news writing—where accuracy and clarity are paramount—this compromises the credibility of the article and the outlet itself. Pennycook (2007) argued that mass media functions not only as a communication tool but also as a powerful linguistic model. When language errors are normalized in news articles, they risk being adopted by the public, particularly by younger readers and students who rely on media as a reference.

The study also found italicization inconsistencies, particularly in the use of local cultural terms and Arabic-origin expressions such as “Arak-arakan Dewa.” According to EYD rules, italicization should be used for words that are truly foreign or have not yet been absorbed into the Indonesian lexicon. In the articles analyzed, these terms were unnecessarily italicized, potentially suggesting that they were unfamiliar or foreign, which was not the case. On the other hand, some foreign words were not italicized when they should have been. This inconsistent use of typographic emphasis indicates a lack of understanding or application of the rules concerning foreign language treatment in formal Indonesian writing. Lubis (2021) highlighted similar problems, concluding that journalists and editors often struggle to differentiate between what constitutes a foreign borrowing and what is already culturally integrated into the language. Misuse of italicization affects clarity and weakens the structural coherence of formal texts.

Another significant finding involved morphological errors, particularly in word formation and affixation. Instances such as the miswriting of “Bila” instead of the correct place name “*Billa*,” or the use of “*Cindera Mata*” instead of “*Cendera Mata*,” reflect a lack of attention to detail in word choice and spelling. These are not just minor typographical mistakes; they can alter meaning and lead to misrepresentation of factual content. Most notably, errors in affixation such as in the phrases “*melakukan penyesuaian harga*” and “*diperkirakan terjadi*” were the most frequent. In these cases, prefixes or suffixes were applied without proper understanding of their grammatical function, sometimes resulting in awkward or incorrect constructions. Fahma (2020) found similar patterns in his analysis of news on Babe.com, concluding that journalists frequently misuse affixes due to either habit or lack of formal grammatical training. As Spencer (1991) has stated, morphological errors can have ripple effects on syntax and semantics, often leading to ambiguous or grammatically incorrect sentences. These findings point to a need for greater linguistic sensitivity and deeper understanding of morphological rules in media writing.

Punctuation and hyphenation issues, while seemingly less serious, had a notable impact on the readability and flow of the articles. Examples include unnecessary use of colons after short introductory words, missing commas in compound sentences, and inconsistent formatting of numerical values such as “Rp 135.” These mechanical errors undermine the structural cohesion of a text and disrupt the reader’s comprehension process. Brown (2012) emphasized that punctuation serves not only grammatical but also rhetorical functions, guiding readers through the

logic and rhythm of sentences. Inaccurate or inconsistent punctuation, therefore, weakens both the clarity and the professional presentation of written work. Velayani et al. (2024) found that repeated punctuation errors in student writing were directly associated with exposure to poorly edited media content, reinforcing the idea that mass media has a significant influence on public literacy patterns.

Overall, these findings highlight the broader implications of language errors in mass media. The media plays a crucial role in shaping linguistic norms and influencing how language is learned, understood, and applied in society. Gee (2014) and Ghufroon (2015) argue that the media, as one of the most accessible sources of written language, has a responsibility to maintain high linguistic standards. When spelling and morphological errors become commonplace in news articles, they risk being internalized by the public, potentially weakening national language competence over time. This is especially relevant in Indonesia, where Bahasa Indonesia serves not only as a means of communication but also as a symbol of national identity and unity.

The results of this study also imply the need for immediate improvement in editorial standards and language policies within media institutions. Journalists and editors should be given access to regular training on the application of the EYD and the structure of the Indonesian language. Collaboration with linguists, educators, and language institutions could help improve the quality of news writing. Language accuracy should not be seen as a minor concern or the sole responsibility of individual writers; rather, it must be embedded in organizational culture and editorial workflow. Masba (2022) and Hasibuan (2016) both emphasized that comprehensive editorial review processes are essential for ensuring the linguistic quality of media content. The use of style guides, automated language tools, and peer-review mechanisms can also support this goal.

It is important to acknowledge the limitations of this study. The sample was limited to 25 news articles from one edition of *Tribun-Timur.com* within a one-month timeframe. While this provides a focused analysis, it restricts the generalizability of the findings. Future studies are encouraged to expand the sample across different media outlets, genres, and time periods to gain a broader understanding of language usage in Indonesian journalism. Additionally, exploring errors at the syntactic and semantic levels would enrich the analysis and offer a more comprehensive picture of language challenges in mass media. Understanding how readers perceive and respond to these errors could also provide insights into their real-world impact on public trust and literacy.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study conducted on 25 news articles from *Tribun Timur* in the *Tribun Sidrap* edition in February 2025, it can be concluded that the use of spelling in these articles has not fully adhered to the guidelines of the Enhanced Spelling System (EYD) Edition V. The research found various types of errors,

including 7 instances of incorrect capitalization, 3 instances of incorrect italicization, 5 errors in word formation, 9 errors in affixation, 5 errors in compound word usage, 1 error in preposition usage, 3 errors in numeral/number writing, and 2 errors in the use of commas. These errors indicate that there is still a need for serious attention to the application of spelling rules in writing online news articles to make public communication more effective, clear, and accurate. Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that journalists and editors of online media, especially at *Tribun-Timur.com*, pay more attention to the proper use of Bahasa Indonesia, particularly in the aspect of spelling according to the *Enhanced Spelling System (EYD) Edition V*. Each news article should undergo a rigorous language editing process before being published to minimize errors in the writing of letters, words, and punctuation. The accuracy of language use significantly impacts the credibility of the media and the understanding of the public as readers. Furthermore, for future researchers, it is suggested to expand the scope of analysis by involving more news sources, a longer time frame, and investigating other types of linguistic errors such as syntactical, semantic, or pragmatic issues. Further research of this nature will be very useful in improving the quality of language in mass media and strengthening public literacy regarding the use of Bahasa Indonesia in accordance with the rules.

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