

## The 4<sup>th</sup> ICoLLiT

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON LANGUAGE,  
LITERATURE AND TEACHING

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### Analysis of Syntactic Errors in Eka Kurniawan's Short Stories: A Study of Sentence Structure and Language Effectiveness

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Received: June 1st, 2025. Revised: July 15th, 2025. Accepted: August 1th, 2025

Available Online: August 10th, 2025.

***How to Cite:* Sasongko, T. A., Kurniawan, P. A., Nuradi, M., & Markhamah, M. (2025). Analysis of Syntactic Errors in Eka Kurniawan's Short Stories: A Study of Sentence Structure and Language Effectiveness. *Proceedings The 4th ICoLLiT*, 213-219.**

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#### Abstract

This study aims to analyze syntactic errors in Eka Kurniawan's short stories, namely *Cantik itu Luka* (Beauty is a Wound), *Love Never Dies*, and *Like Revenge, Rindu Must Be Paid Tuntas* (Vengeance is Mine, All Others Pay Cash). The approach used is qualitative with a descriptive method. Data were collected through text analysis, in which sentences containing syntactic errors were noted and examined. The findings reveal various syntactic errors, particularly in the use of compound sentences, improper phrase combinations, and the inappropriate use of conjunctions. Nevertheless, these errors contribute to the distinctive characteristics of Eka Kurniawan's writing style, which often employs non-standard sentence structures to create a certain narrative atmosphere. This research is expected to contribute to the understanding of syntax in Indonesian literature.

**Keywords:** syntactic errors, short stories, Eka Kurniawan, text analysis, Indonesian language

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### **Abstract**

*Abstract This study aims to analyze syntactic errors in short stories by Eka Kurniawan, namely Cantik itu Luka, Cinta Tak Ada Mati, and Like Revenge, Rindu Must Be Paid Completely. The approach used is qualitative with a descriptive method. Data was collected through text review, in which sentences containing syntactic errors were recorded and analyzed. The results of the study showed that there were various syntactic errors, especially in the use of compound sentences, inappropriate phrase combinations, and inappropriate use of conjunctions. However, these mistakes give certain characteristics to Eka Kurniawan's writing style, which often uses non-standard sentence structures to create certain nuances in the story. This research is expected to contribute to the understanding of syntax in Indonesian literature.*

**Keywords:** *Syntax errors, short stories, Eka Kurniawan, text analysis, Indonesian*

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### **Introduction**

A short story or short story is an imaginative literary work that describes the life of a character in a short format, usually featuring a single problem and solved in a single reading session. Short stories differ from novels because they are more dense and centered on a single event. According to the Great Dictionary of the Indonesian Language, a short story is prose that conveys a brief narrative about a person that does not exceed ten thousand words and gives a strong and satisfying main impression in the context of the character in a certain situation (Najwa Faradilah Tri Utami et al., 2022). In line with opinion (Mutia et al., 2022) Formulating a short story is a fictional story written in prose with important characteristics in the form of a short duration and narrative elements that focus on only one main conflict.

Language errors in practice are common. This can affect the understanding and impression given to the listener (Scotland, 2024). Language errors refer to deviations from the rules of language that have been set, both in terms of phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics. Phonological errors refer to mistakes made by individuals regarding sounds in language, while morphological errors are related to the way a person forms words, syntactic errors are related to arrangement, while semantic errors are related to meaning problems (Muzaki & Darmawan, 2022). A different opinion was also expressed by Ariyanti in (Ariyadi & Utomo, 2020) that language error analysis is a way for researchers to obtain language errors through data collection with the use of pre-existing theories. These mistakes can occur in oral or written form, and are usually triggered by factors such as interference, lack of understanding of the rules, or erroneous habits. In line with opinion (Amalia et al., 2021) That which states errors in language can be interpreted as the use of language, both verbal and written, that is not in accordance with or different from various factors that regulate communication or social norms and does not meet the rules of language. According to (Dahlan, 2020) Language errors must be caused by various factors, such as (1) the language user itself; (2) environmental context; (3) aspects of the language itself (difficulties in speaking); (4) the impact of the first language or mother tongue that was already mastered before mastering the second language; (5) the user's lack of understanding of the language they use; and (6) inaccurate or inadequate language teaching methods.

Etymologically, the word "syntax" comes from the Greek language, which is a combination of the words "sun" which means "with" and "tattein" which means "to place", so it means "to place a group of words or sentences" (Darwin et al., 2021). Syntax is one of the fields in linguistics that focuses on the arrangement of words in the form of phrases, clauses, and sentences. In the context of the Indonesian language, syntax is crucial to understand how meaning is formed from the layout of words. Ramlan's explanation in (& Atiqa Sabardila, 2022) syntax, which is one of the linguistic

sciences that studies discourse, sentences, clauses, and phrases. According to M. Ramlan in (Deasy Supartini et al., 2023), he defines syntax as one of the disciplines in linguistics that discusses the intricacies of discourse, sentences, clauses, and phrases, while Munaf notes that syntax is one of the aspects of linguistics that examines the internal structure of sentences. The opinion of the (Sari, 2021) which defines syntax in language research is understood as a guideline for combining words into sentences or phrases/clauses that have meaning.

In more detail, syntax includes the study of syntactic units such as phrases, clauses, and sentences. A phrase is a combination of words that form a single function in a sentence but does not have a predicate. Based on Chaer's explanation in (Nilawijaya et al., 2023), a phrase is a grammatical element consisting of a collection of words that are not predicative. A clause is a grammatical unit consisting of a subject and a predicate, while a sentence can consist of a single clause (a single sentence) or more than one clause (a compound sentence). A clause is a unit of language that consists of a group of words that have a predictive property (Huda, 2021). Syntax also studies the relationships between elements in sentences, types of sentences based on their structure and function, and principles of effective sentence formation. Thus, syntax plays an important role in creating a logical, coherent, and communicative sentence structure in the use of language.

Based on this background, this study aims to identify and classify syntactic errors found in Eka Kurniawan's short stories, analyze the pattern of syntactic deviations that occur based on standard Indonesian grammar, and explain the extent to which these syntactic errors affect the readability and comprehension of the story. This research is expected to contribute to the study of literary linguistics, especially in understanding the relationship between language forms and aesthetic effects in contemporary Indonesian literary texts.

### Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive method to analyze syntactic errors in short stories by Eka Kurniawan, namely *Beauty Is Wound*, *Love Doesn't Die and Like Revenge*, *Longing Must Be Paid Fully*. Syntax errors identified in the data will be corrected and explained in a way that refers to grammar science (Nathania et al., 2023). Descriptive research, also known as taxonomic research, is so called because its purpose is to explore or explain an existing phenomenon, phenomenon, or social reality (Syahrizal & Jailani, 2023). Data was collected through text review by reading and recording sentences that contained syntactic errors. The analysis was carried out by classifying syntax errors based on their type (e.g. compound sentence errors and phrase combinations), then comparing these errors with standard Indonesian syntax rules. The validity of the data was obtained by comparing the results of the analysis with the literature on syntax theory and previous research.

### Result and Discussion

After analyzing the short stories *Cantik itu Luka*, *Cinta Tak Ada Mati*, and *Like Vengeance*, *Rindu Must Be Paid Completely*, several types of syntactic errors were found that can be distinguished into several main categories:

#### 1. Compound Sentence Structure Errors

In some sections, errors were found in the use of compound sentences that combine two or more clauses without paying attention to proper grammatical rules. For example, in a sentence like the following:

*"He looked out the window, and waited for something uncertain."*

This sentence is inappropriate because of the combination of two clauses with conjunctions

*and* which is not followed by equilibrium in the structure of an equivalent compound sentence. Supposedly, the sentence could be corrected to: *"He looked out the window, then waited for something uncertain."*

## 2. Inaccuracies in the Use of Phrases

Some sentences in Eka Kurniawan's short story also contain errors in combining phrases that are not in accordance with the rules of Indonesian syntax. For example:

*"They both talk to each other about things that have been lost for a long time."*  
The use of the phrase *"things that have been lost for a long time"* sounds awkward and syntactically incorrect. Ideally, this phrase could be replaced with *"things that have been forgotten for a long time"* or *"things that have not been talked about for a long time."*

## 3. Incorrect Use of Splices

In some cases, the use of conjunctions in sentences in Eka Kurniawan's short stories is inappropriate. For example, in the following sentence:

*"He's gone, but he hasn't left any messages."*  
This sentence can be more grammatically correct if it uses the conjunction *"although"* or *"although"*, i.e.: *"He is gone, although he has left no message."*

## 4. Errors in Adverb Placement and Place Descriptions

The placement of the adverb time or place in a sentence is also sometimes not in accordance with the rules of syntax. Example:

*"In that house, they met."*  
Although this sentence is still understandable, the placement of *"at that house"* at the beginning of the sentence makes it less natural in the standard Indonesian structure. A better sentence should be: *"They met in that house."*

From the results of the analysis, it can be concluded that syntactic errors in short stories by Eka Kurniawan more often appear in the use of compound sentences and phrases that are not in accordance with the standard structure of the Indonesian language. A compound sentence is a sentence consisting of two or more clauses, which is basically formed from the combination of two main sentences (Yumni et al., 2022). However, this mistake is not completely detrimental, because some of these mistakes actually show Eka Kurniawan's typical writing style which often plays with unconventional sentence structures. This style gives the impression of free flow and flowing narrative, although in some cases, these errors can affect the readability and clarity of the message you want to convey.

Mistakes in the use of conjunctions and combining sentences also have an impact on the storyline which sometimes feels disconnected or less smooth. This is in line with the opinion (Agkris & Simorangkir, 2023) Using too many conjunctions causes the statement to be unclear and confusing to the audience. However, this could be considered a deliberate artistic choice by the author to create a certain tension or atmosphere in the story.

Compared to previous research on syntactic errors in Indonesian literature. There are similarities in the findings of errors that occur due to the influence of the author's freedom of language style. However, this study found that in Eka Kurniawan's works, these errors more often appear in the context of a more expressive and emotional narrative, thus having a different impact compared to the findings in previous research that focused more on technical errors in language alone.

The similarities with previous research lie in the identification of syntactic errors related to the use of improper conjunctions and sentence structures that seem non-standard. This syntactic error, according to Muzaki and Darmawan (2022), is not always considered a weakness in language, but can be a characteristic of a certain literary style. Ihsana (2020) added that the use of sentence structures that are not in accordance with the rules often arises due to the writer's ignorance or because of freedom in self-expression. In the context of literary works, syntactic errors can also reflect unique local idioms, as stated by Gego, Widayati, and Tobing (2023). Apriwulan, Romania, and Restiana (2021) emphasized that the placement of words that do not match the sentence structure is understandable if it functions as an aesthetic expression. Nafinuddin (2021) stated that even native speakers can make similar mistakes because they have not fully mastered the rules of syntax. In this case, the use of inappropriate conjunctions can also be a stylistic tool to strengthen the nuances of locality or the emotions of the characters (Lathifah, Anggita, & Rosianingsih, 2021). Such mistakes often occur due to the influence of the mother tongue or are deliberately maintained to highlight the character (Solikhah, Janah, & Sidik, 2020). Therefore, as restated by Nafinuddin (2021), the analysis of syntactic errors in literary works is important to understand the extent to which these deviations actually play a role in shaping the peculiarities of the meaning and writing style of an author like Eka Kurniawan.

### Conclusion

An analysis of short stories by Eka Kurniawan reveals four main types of syntactic errors, namely in the structure of compound sentences, the use of phrases, conjunctions, and adverb placement. Although not in accordance with the standard syntactic rules, these mistakes are often part of Eka Kurniawan's typical writing style which tends to be expressive and unconventional. Different from technical errors in formal writing, these deviations actually serve as an aesthetic element that supports the nuances and storyline. These findings reinforce the view that in literature, syntax is not only normative, but also creative.

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