

Error Marking Codes & Symbols

Error Code	Error Explanation
vt	incorrect verb tense
vf	incorrect verb form
ss	incorrect sentence structure
wo	incorrect or awkward word order
sv	incorrect subject-verb agreement
art	incorrect or missing article
s/pl	problem with the singular or plural of a noun
wc	incorrect word choice
wf	incorrect word form
prep	incorrect use of a preposition
frag	sentence fragment - incomplete sentence
rts	run-together sentences
pro ref	pronoun reference unclear or agreement incorrect
id	idiom error- not expressed this way in English
inf	informal English/slang
sp	spelling error - word incorrectly spelled
cap	capitalization - capital letter needed
lc	lower case - word(s) incorrectly capitalized
?	unclear - I don't understand.
Ø	Omit this word. It doesn't belong.
^	Insert a word. Something is missing.
∪	Connect these two words, clauses or sentences.

Error Awareness Sheet

Directions: This Error Awareness Sheet will help you discover what your sentence-level errors are and prioritize them. Put a check in the second column for each error marked on your returned paper. Then, from the most frequent errors in the second column, select two or three that you can begin working on first and put a check next to them in the third column.

Type Of Error	Total Number Of Errors		Priority Errors To Work On
	Paper #1	Paper #2	
incorrect verb tense			
incorrect verb form			
incorrect word order			
sub.-verb agreement			
article error			
singular or plural error			
incorrect word form			
incorrect preposition			
sentence fragment			
run-together sentences			
spelling error			

The following errors are the top priority for proofreading on my final drafts:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

I would appreciate some extra help with the following errors because I am still confused or having trouble:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Global and Local Errors in Writing

Global Errors: A "global error" is a more serious error in a piece of writing. A global error interferes with the reader's ability to understand an entire sentence or paragraph within a piece of writing. A global error usually affects syntax and cohesion. A global error may also be a less serious yet high frequency error, such as an incorrect or missing article, which the writer makes throughout a large portion of the text.

Local Errors: A "local error" is a less serious error in a piece of writing. A local error is generally confined to a single clause and therefore affects only a small part of a sentence. While a local error may indeed be distracting and annoying, it usually does not impair the intelligibility of an entire sentence or paragraph. A local error will become a more serious global error if it appears frequently within a portion of the text.

Clause 1

Clause

- * Because I can't really concentrate my homeworks, I just only can study when I babysit.

The errors are these:

<u>Because</u> is attached to the wrong clause.	Global
An uncountable noun <u>homework</u> has been made plural.	Local
The preposition is missing from the verb <u>concentrate</u> .	Local
The word order of <u>only can</u> is awkward.	Local
The expression <u>just only</u> is non-idiomatic.	Local

The errors in Clause 2 are local because they are confined to a single clause. But misplacing the subordinating conjunction because in Clause 1 is a global error, as it affects both clauses, and the meaning of the entire sentence. The conjunction because, relates the two clauses; it should indicate the cause, not the result, in this relationship.

Consider the impact on the meaning of the sentence when all the local errors are corrected, leaving the global error because alone:

- * Because I can't really concentrate on my homework,
I can only study when I babysit. Local errors corrected

Consider the impact on the meaning of the sentence when only the placement of the conjunction because is corrected, leaving the global errors alone:

- * I can't really concentrate my homeworks
because I just only can study when I babysit. Global errors corrected

Any one correction may improve the sentence, but some do much more for the intelligibility than others. Correcting the global error, placement of the conjunction because, adds the most to the overall improvement of the sentence.

Some Common Global (More Serious) ESL Errors

The following writing errors are generally more serious because they make it challenging for the reader to accurately understand the meaning of entire sentences or paragraphs. Fortunately, the rules governing the usage of these aspects of English grammar can be successfully integrated into a writing curriculum. ESL students can indeed learn these rules and apply them responsibly if they are also familiarized with effective proofreading strategies. It certainly also helps if teachers assist their developing ESL writers in establishing manageable, incremental proofreading priorities.

Verb Tense (incorrect verb tense)

- * I have a reading problem since I begin to study in the United States.

Verb Consistency (inappropriate shifts in verb tense)

- * I study with the television on sometimes when I was in high school because I am not interested in my homework.

Verb Form (verb incorrectly formed)

- * I have studying English for three years and I did not made a lot of progress.

Modal (incorrect use or formation of a modal)

- * I should had read the chapter twice to get a better understanding.

Sentence Structure (incorrect or awkward sentence structure)

- * There are more than me in this class have a problem with reading the textbook.

Subject-Verb Agreement (incorrect subject-verb agreement)

- * My brother bother me a lot when I am trying to do my homework reading.

Word Order (incorrect or awkward word order)

- * I don't understand what is the author talking about in this article.

Clause Formation (incorrect usage of subordinating or coordinating conjunction)

- * Even I try, but I don't get a good grade.
- * Because I don't finish my Biology chapters, so it is difficult for me to understand those difficult science words.

Fragment (incomplete sentence)

- * Besides the homework reading I have to finish.

Run-On Sentences (two independent sentences/clauses joined with a comma or no punctuation)

- * My favorite place to read is my bedroom, it helps me relax and concentrate.

Pronoun Reference /Agreement (unclear pronoun reference or incorrect agreement)

- * My tutor gave me some good suggestion about my writing problem, and I will use them.

Unclear (the meaning or message of a clause or sentence is unclear)

- * To achieve this confident in myself I have come out to the world and be part of it.

Some Common Local (Less Serious) ESL Errors

The following writing errors are generally less serious because they are usually confined to a single clause and do not dramatically alter the meaning of an entire sentence or paragraph. These errors can nonetheless be fairly annoying and distracting to many readers, particularly when they occur frequently throughout a text. Unfortunately, the guidelines for appropriate usage of these grammatical items are quite complex and take considerable time and effort to master.

ESL students must have repeated exposure to correct usage of these aspects of English grammar, both within and outside of the classroom, in order to begin to internalize the detailed rules. Control over these relatively complex aspects of English grammar generally comes very late in an ESL student's multiple stages of second language acquisition. Teachers should therefore be more patient with global errors and help developing writers establish fair, manageable, and incremental editing priorities, taking into consideration the gravity and frequency of the writer's errors as well as the student's current level of ESL proficiency.

Word Choice (wrong word choice, including prepositions)

- * I didn't know that we were supposed to put a biography at the end of our term paper.
- * My teacher discussed me about my paper in her office.
- * I feel very frustrated on my Biology class because I have trouble noting.

Word Forms (wrong word form)

- * My apartment is a distraction place to do my homework.
- * My sister can easy to read English books, but not me.
- * I have difficult to finish all my assignments on time.

Verb Complements (form of a verbal/verb complement is incorrect)

- * I enjoy to study English vocabulary.
- * I don't want discussing my paper with other students.

Article (incorrect or missing article)

- * I don't make a progress in my English reading.
- * I hope University will help me to improve my writing and reading ability.
- * I haven't decided on the college major.

Countable and Uncountable Nouns (a problem with the singular or plural form of a countable or uncountable noun in English)

- * I don't understand the feedbacks on my essay.
- * I did a lot of researches for this term paper, and I don't know how to organize them.
- * I skim all the page before I read the chapter to see what it is about.

Nonidiomatic English (not expressed this way in English)

- * I am studying to my high point to get a good grade in this class.
- * The thing I worry most is my essays.