

The Grammatical Mistakes Found in the Movie Script of *Bad Boys for Life* (2020)

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| Received: 10/04/2025 | Revised: 04/05/2025 | Accepted: 07/05/2025 |

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Abstract

This study focuses on analysing the types of grammatical mistakes found in movie script of *Bad Boys for Life* (2020). The main data were obtained from the script of the movie and were analysed based on the conceptual framework of grammatical mistake theory. This research is using Descriptive Qualitative Method to analyze the grammatical mistakes of some sentences from the *Bad Boys for Life* movie script. The data (primary) of this research are all sentences in the *Bad Boys for Life* movie script. Not all sentences in the script are analysed but only the ones uttered by the main characters, namely Mike and Marcus. We do certain actions in order to gather the data. These include: (1) reading the screenplay, (2) spotting grammatical errors in the script, (3) compiling the sentences that contain grammatical errors, and 4) analyzing the errors, particularly in the area of grammar, by consulting any article sources. The grammatical mistakes found are categorized into 4 types. They are: 1) Missing the auxiliary verb, 2) Problems with the subject and verb agreement, 3) Problems with the pattern of question or interrogative sentence, and 4) Other kinds of error. The analysis of the error is done descriptively by citing related references. Totally, there are 69 errors but only 19 are discussed here.

Keywords: grammar, mistake, grammatical mistake, movie script, utterance.

1. Introduction

Script is a common element in a movie because script establishes what's going to happen (Jaiboonlue, 2023). According to Gandhi et al., a movie script is, of course, the document that specifies the sequence of events, cinematography techniques, and dialogue to be depicted in a non-interactive movie (Gandhi et al., 2023).. A script consists of the dialogue that must be spoken by the cast (Khasanah, 2022). Unfortunately, the dialogue in script sometimes contain some grammatical errors.

Grammatical mistakes can have potential "danger" (Sipayung & Benarita, 2023); including the ones that appear in a movie's script". Danger here means grammatical mistakes will have an effect for English language learners and non-English native speakers who will use English (Juliansyah & Harun, 2021). This is because grammatical mistakes are often found in any kinds of text (Tahang et al., 2024); including movie's script in this day and age. It can cause the learners and those non-native speakers to get used to using sentences that contain mistakes and

be considered to be correct. If this continues to happen, people will normalize the mistake and they cannot learn English in a proper way (Lestari et al., 2021).

One of the movie scripts which is interesting to be analysed is the one from movie of *Bad Boys for Life*. This is a film about two detectives investigating a case related to Mike's past as the main character in this film. There are many speeches that contain errors found in this script. The mistakes occur in the words of Mike, Marcus and other characters. We are interested to choose this film because the language used in this film tends to be modern and often used by young people. In addition, the actor who plays in this movie, Will Smith, is one of the most favourite actors that makes this movie interesting.

As this research is discussing the mistakes found in the script of a movie, so it raises questions of research such as: 1) What are grammatical errors found in the script?, and 2) How is the mistake described? This research is done through a qualitative approach in which the researchers did the analysis on the sentences on the script. This research is hopefully available to be a reference for further research with the same topic but different research objects, for example different movies or different scripts.

2. Method

Since this method of the research is qualitative, the approach of this research is also qualitative. This method is to cover what quantitative method cannot do (Moroi, 2021). Khalifa says that qualitative research has close connection with assumptions and the use of interpretive/theoretical frameworks (Khalifa, 2023). In relation to this study, qualitative researchers use an emerging qualitative approach to inquiry the collection of data in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under study (Xu & Zammit, 2020). The approach also applies data analysis that is both inductive and deductive (Sanmathi Kumar, 2024). According to Intayos et al., qualitative approach to research is concerned with subjective assessment of attitudes, opinions and behavior (Intayos et al., 2021). Research in such a situation is a function of researcher's insights and impressions (Satchell et al., 2023).

The object of this research is the movie script *Bad Boys for Life* written by Joe Carnahan and Chris Bremner. The movie script is taken from Scraps from the Loft web site (Loft, 2020). Based on this object, the data (primary) of this research are all sentences that contain mistakes in *Bad Boys for Life* movie script. However, the sentences being analyzed are only from the main characters in the film *Bad Boys for Life*, namely Mike and Marcus.

In collecting the data, we do some steps. They are: (1) Reading the movie script, (2) Identifying the grammatical mistakes in sentences from the movie script, (3) Gathering the sentences containing grammatical mistakes, and 4) Analyzing the error especially on the aspect of grammar by referring to any sources from articles. The main point of analyzing the error is we can make our judgment whether the sentence is right or wrong based on the normal English grammar which is usually used in English textbooks (Jakobsson & Knutsson, 2020).

3. Results and Discussion

There are at least 4 classifications of errors in utterances being analyzed. There are total 66 sentences that are identified mistaken, but the following discussion focuses only several data based on each error classification.

3.1 Missing the auxiliary verb

Table 1. Analysis of Sentence Mistake on Datum 1

Sentences	Analysis/discussion
Oh, <u>you shrinking</u> me now. (Carnahan and Bremner, 2020)	This sentence is not correct because the missing of word 'are' should be placed after 'you'.

This sentence in Datum 1 contains grammatical mistakes because the sentence misses the word 'are' that should be placed after subject 'you' since this sentence applies the present continuous tense. This sentence uses present continuous tense because the context is *Mike was giving statement to Rita of what he feels*. That is the action that is in progress for a certain time in the present. Things like this are only expressed using the present continuous tense. It is believed that the present continuous tense is mainly used for stating an action that is taking place at the moment of speaking (MAKNUNAH, 2024). In other reference, the present continuous tense is also used to show an action that will take place in the near future (Pereira et al., 2020). It is formed using the present tense **of the auxiliary verb be + the present participle** of the main verb (Lestari et al., 2021).

Table 2. Analysis of Sentence Mistake on Datum 2

Sentences	Analysis/discussion
<u>we firing</u> gummy bears. (Carnahan and Bremner, 2020)	This sentence is not correct because missing word 'are' should be placed after the subject 'we'.

This sentence in Datum 2 contains grammatical mistakes because the sentence misses the word 'are' that should be placed after subject 'we' since this sentence applies the present continuous tense. This sentence uses present continuous tense because the context is *Mike was talking to Marcus about the action that happened in that time*. Things like this are only expressed using the present continuous tense. It is believed that the present continuous tense is mainly used for stating an action that is taking place at the moment of speaking (MAKNUNAH, 2024). In other reference, the present continuous tense is also used to show an action that will take place in the near future (Pereira et al., 2020). It is formed using the present tense **of the auxiliary verb be + the present participle** of the main verb (Lestari et al., 2021).

Table 3. Analysis of Sentence Mistake on Datum 3

Sentences	Analysis/discussion
Well, maybe <u>I already</u> been swallowed. (Carnahan and Bremner, 2020)	This sentence is not correct because missing word 'have' should be placed after 'I'.

This sentence in Datum 3 contains grammatical mistakes because the sentence misses the word 'have' that should be placed after subject 'I' since this sentence applies the present perfect

tense. This sentence uses present perfect tense because the context is *Mike was talking to Marcus about what has happened (past events that still continue today)*. Things like this are only expressed using the present perfect tense. Franco and Tagliamonte state that the present perfect tense is formed by **using the present tense of the auxiliary verb have (or has, if used with third-person singular pronouns) along with the past participle of the “main” verb** (Franco & Tagliamonte, 2022).

Table 4. Analysis of Sentence Mistake on Datum 4

Sentences	Analysis/discussion
<u>I been</u> telling your ass that shit for years. (Carnahan and Bremner, 2020)	This sentence is not correct because missing of word ‘have’ should be placed after ‘I’.

This sentence in Datum 4 contains grammatical mistakes because the sentence misses the word ‘have’ that should be placed after subject ‘I’ since this sentence applies the Present Perfect tense. This sentence uses present perfect tense because the context is Mike was suggesting Marcus since long ago until now about wearing glasses (past events that still continue today). Things like this are only expressed using the present perfect tense. Franco and Tagliamonte state that the present perfect tense is formed by **using the present tense of the auxiliary verb have (or has, if used with third-person singular pronouns) along with the past participle of the “main” verb** (Franco & Tagliamonte, 2022).

Table 5. Analysis of Sentence Mistake on Datum 5

Sentences	Analysis/discussion
No. No, <u>we not doing</u> that with the next generation.	This sentence is not correct because missing of word ‘are’ should be placed after ‘we’.
(Carnahan and Bremner, 2020)	

This sentence in Datum 5 contains grammatical mistakes because the sentence misses the word ‘are’ that should be placed after the subject ‘we’ in a negative sentence. This sentence uses present continuous tense because the context is Mike was talking to Marcus about the action that happened in that time. Things like this are only expressed using the present continuous tense. Topal states that the present continuous tense is mainly used for stating an action that is taking place at the moment of speaking, or an action that will take place in the near future (Topal, 2024). It is formed by using the present tense of **the auxiliary verb be + the present participle of the main verb** (Mudhsh et al., 2024). Kallulli and Roberts add that **we use ‘not’ after auxiliary be (contracted as isn’t or aren’t; am not is not normally contracted) before the present participle of the main verb for negative sentence** (Kallulli & Roberts, 2025).

3.2 The subject and verb agreement

Table 6. Analysis of Sentence Mistake on Datum 6

Sentences Containing Errors	Analysis/Discussion
Hey, even the Batmobile <u>don't</u> hold the road like this bitch. (Carnahan and Bremner, 2020)	In this sentence, the word 'don't' is not correct. 'Don't' should be 'doesn't' because the subject is 'Batmobile' which is singular.

This sentence in Datum 6 contains grammatical mistakes because the verb 'don't' is not in agreement with the 'Batmobile' which is singular. Since this sentence applies to the simple present in a negative context, 'don't' should be 'doesn't'. This sentence uses a simple present because the context is Mike was talking about a general statement of the Batmobile. Things like this are only expressed using the present tense. Sorokin et al. state that Simple Present tense is used when we speak about habits, general facts, and timetables (Sorokin et al., 2021). For negative context, it describes what is not (or no longer) the case. We form these by **adding the auxiliary verb do (or does in the third-person singular) and the word not after the subject of the sentence. These can also be contracted to don't or doesn't** (Ruslan Hasyim et al., 2023).

Table 7. Analysis of Sentence Mistake on Datum 7

Sentences	Analysis/discussion
Oh, mm-mm. No. Uncle Mike <u>don't</u> want to catch that. (Carnahan and Bremner, 2020)	In this sentence word 'don't' is not correct. Subject 'Uncle Mike' should use 'doesn't' because the subject is singular.

This sentence in Datum 7 contains grammatical mistakes because the verb 'don't' is not in agreement with the subject 'Uncle Mike' which is singular. Since this sentence applies the Simple Present tense in negative context, 'don't' should use 'doesn't'. This sentence uses a simple present because the context is Mike was talking to Marcus about circumstances that may not be able to change. Things like this are only expressed using the present tense. Sorokin et al. state that Simple Present tense is used when we speak about habits, general facts, and timetables (Sorokin et al., 2021). For negative context, it describes what is not (or no longer) the case. We form these by **adding the auxiliary verb do (or does in the third-person singular) and the word not after the subject of the sentence. These can also be contracted to don't or doesn't** (Ruslan Hasyim et al., 2023).

Table 8. Analysis of Sentence Mistake on Datum 8

Sentences	Analysis/discussion
This <u>don't</u> have nothing to do with me trusting you or not. (Carnahan and Bremner, 2020)	In this sentence the word 'don't' is not correct. Should use 'doesn't' because the subject is 'this' which is singular.

This sentence in Datum 8 contains grammatical mistakes because the verb ‘don’t’ is not in agreement with the subject ‘this’ which is singular. Since the sentence is the simple present tense in negative context, ‘don’t’ should be replaced by ‘doesn’t’. This sentence uses simple present tense because the context is Mike was giving a statement about the fact to Rita that occurred at that moment. Things like this are only expressed using the simple present tense. Sorokin et al. state that Simple Present tense is used when we speak about habits, general facts, and timetables (Sorokin et al., 2021). For negative context, it describes what is not (or no longer) the case. We form these by **adding the auxiliary verb do (or does in the third-person singular) and the word not after the subject of the sentence. These can also be contracted to don’t or doesn’t** (Ruslan Hasyim et al., 2023).

Table 9. Analysis of Sentence Mistake on Datum 9

Sentences	Analysis/discussion
He definitely knew you <u>was</u> bullshitting with that. (Carnahan and Bremner, 2020)	In this sentence, the word ‘was’ is not correct. Should use ‘were’ because the subject is ‘you’.

This sentence in Datum 9 contains grammatical mistakes because the word ‘was’ is not in agreement with ‘you’. Since the sentence is past continuous tense, ‘was’ should be ‘were’. This sentence uses past continuous tense because the context is Mike was talking to Marcus about an event that is happening in the past that continued until the present moment. Things like this are only expressed using the past continuous tense. Lestari et al. state that the past continuous tense also called the past progressive is used to describe something that was in progress at a certain moment in the past and either finished in the past or continued until the present moment. Herring adds **was or were (the past tense of the auxiliary verb be) followed by the present participle of the main verb** for affirmative context (Lestari et al., 2021).

Table 10. Analysis of Sentence Mistake on Datum 10

Sentences	Analysis/discussion
I don’t trust a <u>person that don’t</u> wanna kill him. (Carnahan and Bremner, 2020)	In this sentence, the word ‘don’t’ is not correct. Should be used ‘doesn’t’ because the subject is ‘person’ which is singular.

This sentence in Datum 11 contains grammatical mistakes because the word ‘don’t’ is not in agreement with the subject ‘person’ which is singular. Since the sentence is the simple present tense in negative context, ‘don’t’ should be ‘doesn’t’. This sentence uses simple present tense because the context is Marcus was giving a statement of the fact of what Marcus feels that occurred at that moment. Things like this are only expressed using the simple present tense. Sorokin et al. state that Simple Present tense is used when we speak about habits, general facts, and timetables (Sorokin et al., 2021). For negative context, it describes what is not (or no longer) the case. We form these by **adding the auxiliary verb do (or does in the third-person singular) and the word not after the subject of the sentence. These can also be contracted to don’t or doesn’t** (Ruslan Hasyim et al., 2023).

3.3 The pattern of question or interrogative sentence

Table 11. Analysis of Sentence Mistake on Datum 11

Sentences	Analysis/discussion
How long you been married? (Carnahan and Bremner, 2020)	This sentence is not correct because missing of word 'have should be placed before 'you'

This sentence in Datum 11 contains grammatical mistakes because the sentence misses the word 'have' should be placed before 'you' since this sentence applies the present perfect tense in interrogative context. This sentence uses present perfect tense because the context is Mike was asking Marcus about how long has the marriage been (past events that still continue today). Things like this are only expressed using the present perfect tense. Franco and Tagliamonte state that present perfect tense is formed by using the present tense of the **auxiliary verb have (or has, if used with third-person singular pronouns) along with the past participle of the "main" verb**. Herring adds if an interrogative (question) sentence is in the present perfect tense, **the subject and the auxiliary verb have are inverted** (Franco & Tagliamonte, 2022).

Table 12. Analysis of Sentence Mistake on Datum 12

Sentences	Analysis/discussion
<u>What you</u> talking about? (Carnahan and Bremner, 2020)	This sentence is not correct because missing of word 'are' should be placed before 'you'.

This sentence in Datum 12 contains grammatical mistakes because the sentence misses the word 'are' that should be placed before the subject 'you' in the interrogative sentence. This sentence uses present continuous tense because the context is Mike was asking Marcus about the action that is in progress for a certain time in the present. Things like this are only expressed using the present tense. Lestari et al. state that the present continuous tense is mainly used for stating an action that is taking place at the moment of speaking, or an action that will take place in the near future. It is formed by using the present tense of **the auxiliary verb be + the present participle** of the main verb (Lestari et al., 2021). Deniz et al. point out that Interrogative (question) sentences in the present continuous tense are formed by **reversing the verb be and the subject** (Deniz et al., 2023). Sandjaja and Ambalegin add the present continuous can also be used with the question words who, what, where when, why, and how (Sandjaja & Ambalegin, 2024).

Table 13. Analysis of Sentence Mistake on Datum 13

Sentences	Analysis/discussion
<u>You're saying</u> that you actually outran me? (Carnahan and Bremner, 2020)	This sentence is not correct because misplacement of the word 'are' should be placed before 'you'

This sentence in Datum 13 contains grammatical mistakes because the sentence is incorrect in the placement of the word 'are' that should be placed before subject 'you' in interrogative sentence. This sentence uses present continuous tense because the context is Mike was asking Rita of what Marcus said. That is the action that is in progress for a certain time in the present. Things like this are only expressed using the present tense. Lestari et al. state that the present continuous tense is mainly used for stating an action that is taking place at the moment of speaking, or an action that will take place in the near future. It is formed by using the present tense of **the auxiliary verb be + the present participle** of the main verb (Lestari et al., 2021). Deniz et al. point out that Interrogative (question) sentences in the present continuous tense are formed by **reversing the verb be and the subject** (Deniz et al., 2023). Sandjaja and Ambalegin add the present continuous can also be used with the question words who, what, where when, why, and how (Sandjaja & Ambalegin, 2024).

Table 14. Analysis of Sentence Mistake on Datum 14

Sentences	Analysis/discussion
<u>You</u> beat me in a footrace? (Carnahan and Bremner, 2020)	This sentence is not correct because of missing word 'did' should be placed before 'you'.

This sentence in Datum 14 contains grammatical mistakes because the sentence misses the verb 'did' that should be placed before the subject 'you' in the interrogative sentence. This sentence uses simple past tense because the context is Mike was asking Marcus of the footrace matches that have already happened. That is the action that has happened in the past. Things like this are only expressed using the simple past tense. Abdullah and Ardhy state that the simple past tense (also called the simple past tense, or simply the past simple) is used to express completed actions. Its structure is simply the past-tense form of the verb (Abdullah Syukur & Ardhy Supraba, 2022). The past simple tense only **uses the auxiliary verb 'did' when it is used in a question** or becomes negative. Rahma et al. add we have to use the auxiliary verb 'did' to make interrogative sentences (sentences that ask questions) in the past simple tense. In this case, however, **'did' comes before the subject, rather than the verb** (Rahma et al., 2024).

Table 15. Analysis of Sentence Mistake on Datum 15

Sentences	Analysis/discussion
<u>You</u> retired? (Carnahan and Bremner, 2020)	This sentence is not correct because missing of word 'are' should be placed before 'you' at the beginning of the sentence.

This sentence in Datum 15 contains grammatical mistakes because the sentence misses to be 'are' that should be placed before the subject 'you' in an interrogative sentence. This sentence uses a simple present because the context is Mike was talking about states the events that took place in the present about Marcus is retired. Things like this are only expressed using

the present tense. Lestari et al. state that present simple tense (also called the simple present tense) is used when we speak about habits, general facts, and timetables (Lestari et al., 2021). However, Astri et al. believe that just because something is true does not necessarily mean it takes the Present Simple tense, nor does something have to be occurring in the present moment in time for it to be in the Present Simple tense. The formula is generally **to be + subject + complement** (Astri et al., 2023).

3.4 Other error

Table 16. Analysis of Sentence Mistake on Datum 16

Sentences	Analysis/discussion
That is not <u>a</u> <u>undercover</u> dress. (Carnahan and Bremner, 2020)	In this sentence word 'a' is not correct. Should be use 'an' because 'undercover' starts with vowel sound.

This sentence in Datum 16 contains grammatical error named Misformation because the word 'a' is not in agreement with 'undercover'. **We should use 'an' because word 'undercover' starts with vowel sound.** Note that this rule applies to the sound of the noun, rather than the specific spelling (Juliansyah & Harun, 2021).

Table 17. Analysis of Sentence Mistake on Datum 17

Sentences	Analysis/discussion
<u>Who</u> he's talking to. (Carnahan and Bremner, 2020)	This sentence is a dependent clause and cannot stand alone. This sentence is missing independent clause.

This sentence in Datum 17 contains grammatical mistake because the sentence misses the independent clause. The sentence above is dependent clause and cannot stand alone since this sentence applies the complex sentence. Makhsetdinova states that the dependent clause is introduced and linked to the independent clause by a subordinating conjunction (Makhsetdinova, 2025). Meanwhile, Frey and Frey state that an independent clause is a simple sentence and it can stand on its own (Frey & Frey, 2023). In addition, Frey and Frey add a dependent clause is a group of words including a verb which do not form a complete sentence by themselves, and so depend on the existence of an independent clause.

Table 18. Analysis of Sentence Mistake on Datum 18

Sentences Containing Errors	Analysis/discussion
But you still need to make <u>a</u> <u>honest</u> woman out of my baby girl there. (Carnahan and Bremner, 2020)	In this sentence word 'a' is not correct. Should use 'an' because 'honest' starts with vowel sound.

This sentence in Datum 18 contains grammatical mistake because the word 'a' is not in agreement with 'honest'. The sentence should use 'an' because 'honest' starts with vowel sound.

Note that this rule applies to the sound of the noun, rather than the specific spelling (Juliansyah & Harun, 2021).

Table 19. Analysis of Sentence Mistake on Datum 19

Sentences	Analysis/discussion
That was <u>a</u> ass-whupping. (Carnahan and Bremner, 2002)	In this sentence, word 'a' is not correct. Should use 'an' because 'ass-whupping' starts with vowel sound

This sentence in Datum 19 contains grammatical error named Misformation because the word 'a' is not in agreement with 'ass-whupping'. **We should use 'an' because 'ass-whupping' starts with vowel sound.** Note that this rule applies to the sound of the noun, rather than the specific spelling (Juliansyah & Harun, 2021).

4. Conclusion

Learning movies is such a fun source to learn language because movies provide us with English in a real context. Real context here means the use of English as it is done in this era. In this era, people start ignoring grammatical rules since the number of slang languages that have sprung up. We suggest the rampant use of slang language, but do not neglect grammatical rules because grammar skill is important in every aspect of life in formal situations for example in education, leadership and also social life to employment opportunities.

The grammar mistakes found in the utterances produced by the actors can be categorized into several types, such as: 1) Missing the auxiliary verb, 2) The pattern of question or interrogative sentence, 3) The subject and verb agreement, and 4) Other error. The most common mistakes are the errors on the missing of the auxiliary verb. The interesting thing is that though the utterances contain errors, the communication still runs smoothly because the speakers understand the context of the sentences.

By analysing grammatical mistakes found in movie script, we suggest language learners to be aware of the utterance that contains grammatical errors and be able to distinguish sentences that contain mistakes and do not contain mistakes. Try to learn through different sources such as songs, books, and so on for comparison of the errors. Mistakes found in movie scripts can be influential for language learners in learning language in movies, because these days many people learn language in a variety of sources not only from books. This is because there is very little interest in reading in this era, so people try to learn in other more pleasant sources such as songs, films, internet, games, and so on.

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