

ANALYZING OF THE STUDENTS' ERROR IN USING COUNTABLE AND UNCOUNTABLE NOUNS IN WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT AT THE EIGHT GRADE OF SMP NEGERI 2 MUARA IN ACADEMIC YEAR 2022/2023

Septiani R Siregar¹, Lamhot Situmeang², Juandi Nababan³

septianisiregar43@gmail.com
lamhot.m.situmeang@gmail.com
juandinababan8@gmail.com

English Study Program, Faculty of English Teacher's Training and Education University of Sisingamangaraja XII Tapanuli

Abstract

This study mainly aims to analyzing of the students' error in using countable and uncountable nouns in writing descriptive text at the eight grade of SMP Negeri 2 Muara in academic year 2022/2023. The subjects of this study consisted of 24 students of class VIII-A. The aims of this study were (1) to find out the types of mistakes students made in forming countable and uncountable nouns in writing descriptive text. (2) to find out the students' reasons for forming countable and uncountable nouns in writing descriptive text. This research uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive approach. The collected errors are identified and classified based on The Surface Structure Taxonomy (SST) which defines three types of errors, namely omission, addition, and misinformation. The results showed that (1) the category of errors in the formation of countable and uncountable nouns that were most often made by students of class VIII-A of SMP Negeri 2 Muara was formation errors, the second was misformation errors with a total of 7 errors, and the lowest error frequency was addition errors with a total of 3 errors. (2) The error referred to is not yet mastering the forms of countable and uncountable nouns because they do not know the basic principles of using countable and uncountable nouns and have difficulty differentiating between countable and uncountable nouns.

Keywords: *eror analysis, countable uncountable noun, descriptive writing text*

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

In everyday human life, we need communication to talk to one another. In communicating we need language as a medium. Language is used in every situation whether formal or not official. "We use language with the intention of communicating with one another the other, to express our personal reactions to situations, to stimulate a response in others and to express a thought. As an international language, English is used in various fields, in particular in education. In Indonesia, English is considered a foreign language and is taught formal education from secondary level to higher education level. English drama and important role in the modern era. This means that English can be used to help students communicate with others and master science, technology, arts and culture as long as there are still many books written in English.

English has four basic skills; they speak, listen, write, and read. The four English skills have been categorized into two skills, speaking and writing, which

are productive skills. While listening and reading are receptive. Furthermore, Afrin (2016) states that writing is considered a productive skill and a useful tool for the learning process. It is the most widely used skill in evaluating student performance at almost all levels of education. On the other hand, Morley (2007) says that writing is an extreme act of attention and memory. It begs your brain cells to make new connections. In addition, Brown (2004) adds that writing is basically a connection for recording speech and for strengthening the grammatical and lexical features of language. It can be concluded that writing is the most important skill to master because it can increase brain growth and is one of the most used skills in each student's evaluation.

In English grammar, all words are divided into nine major classes. This class of words is called Parts of Speech, namely; articles, nouns, adjectives, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions and interjections. One of the Parts of Speech that will be discussed is nouns. Nouns are one of the most important parts of the English language. According to Laidlaw

(1987) says that a noun is the name of a person, place, or object. In learning about nouns, students are introduced to countable and uncountable nouns.

Countable and uncountable nouns are discussed since students in junior high school. However, several students may do not understand with its form. They cannot apply the right rules in forming countable and uncountable nouns. An error that students usually made is in arranging uncountable noun as countable noun. For example, "I need paper to write a letter". The correct one is "I need some paper to write a letter".

However, making mistakes in learning English is a natural process. Naturally, because of the structural differences between mother tongue and foreign language, it involves errors or even mistakes. Brown (1987) says that the second stage is a process that clearly does not differ from learning the first stage in its trial and error. However, it cannot be ignored. Teachers must be aware of this problem so that teachers can do something to prevent their students from making the same mistake. The mistakes they make should be considered as an important part of language learning. One strategy to prevent students from making the same mistake is to analyze the student's own mistakes, which is called "Error Analysis".

Based on that explanation above, the writer is interested in doing error analysis on the students work on countable and uncountable nouns in writing descriptive text. In doing this research, the writer chooses the second grade of SMP N 2 Muara. Thus, the title of this research is **"Analyzing of The Students' Error of Using Countable and Uncountable Nouns in Writing Descriptive Text"**

The Problem of the Study

Based on the background above, the research problem is formulated as follows: "What are the types of errors students make in using countable and uncountable nouns in writing descriptive text at the eight grade of students of SMPN 2 Muara in the 2022/2023 academic year"?

The Objective of the Study

The objective of the study is to find error that made by students' using countable and uncountable nouns in writing descriptive text at the eight grade students' of SMPN 2 Muara in academic year 2022/2023.

The Scope of the Study

To focus on this problem, this research is limited to a discussion of errors in the use of countable and uncountable nouns in writing descriptive texts at the

eight grade students of SMPN 2 Muara in the 2022/2023 academic year.

The Significance of the Study

Based on the research objectives, the results of this study may be useful for readers.

1. For students, this research is expected to help students to find out their weaknesses in using countable and uncountable nouns especially in writing descriptive text. Furthermore, after knowing their weaknesses, they can learn better to use countable and uncountable nouns.
2. For English teacher, hopefully the result of this study can help the teacher to teach and developing english writing skill and in using countable and uncountable noun.
3. For the researcher, the result of the study hopefully can help herself as a candidate of English teacher to improve English teaching mastery.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definition of Analysis

Analysis is an activity to check or investigate an event through data to find out the actual situation. According to Wiradi (Hadiyanto and Makinuddin, 2006) analysis is an activity that contains a number of activities such as parsing, distinguish, give something to beat and beatback according to certain criteria then searched for its meaning and interpreted meaning. Analysis or analysis according to Komaruddin (2002) is an activity think to decompose a whole into components so that recognize component signs, reply to each other, and function each in an integrated whole. Based on the description from this, it can be concluded that analysis or analysis is an activity in the form of observing the process of something by sorting, uncovering, differentiating, and group according to certain criteria to find out the information. Actually,

The function analysis as follows :

- Collect data contained in a particular environment.
- Analysis can also be applied in various types of environment and conditions.
- Analysis will be more optimally used in critical situations that require a strategy.
- Analysis has a function to be able to collect data contained in an environment.

The purpose of the analysis is as follows :

- Collect data which can then be used for various purposes of the analyzer. Usually it

will be used in resolving crises of conflicts, or it can only be used as an archive.

- Used to resolve crises, conflicts or can be used as an archive.
- Analysis in the field of education is used to conduct research in various scientific subjects
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Definition of Errors

Errors is an act or condition of unintentional or inadvertent deviation from a code of conduct. Errors are predictable and can be handled when they occur. Meanwhile, Gass and Selinker stated that "Error can be considered as red flags; they provide a window into the system state evidence of the learner knowledge of a second language, or a foreign language. Error in second language learning are not to be seen alone as imperfect learning outcomes, because it gives an indication that students is the number of some system that is, to impose regularly on the language against learners.

Based on Dullay, "Errors are the flawed side of a learner's speech or writing. It is a part of a conversation or composition that deviates from several selected norms of mature language performance. Which means someone got lost language performance norms. Making error is part of the language learn, and that is inevitable, because one cannot learn a language without make a error.

To make at the important distinction between error and error, in their book *Second Language Acquisition*, Susan and Selinker define error as the same as speech error; that is, they are generally one-time events only. Errors, on the other hand, are systematic; that is, it is likely to occur repeatedly and not be recognized by learner as a error. This means that the error is the same as a slip of the tongue usually only happens once, learners who make error can do it recognize it as a form of error. Errors usually occur repeatedly, and a student who makes a mistake cannot recognize it as a form of error, therefore she cannot correct it either.

Another concept of error by Brown, he defines "Errors as a process for observing, analyzing, and classifying deviations from the second rule language and then reveal the system operated by the learner". It seems this concept is the same as Crystal, he defines "error are techniques for identify, classify, and systematically interpret unacceptable the form generated by someone learning a foreign language, using one of principles and procedures provided by linguistics".

On the other hand, Richards stated that "error is the study of mistakes created by learners of a second or foreign language. Error can be made to find out how well someone knows a language, find out how one learns a language, and obtains information about common difficulties in language learning, as an in teaching or in the preparation of teaching materials".

The definition above explains that error is an activity to identify, classify and interpret or describe error made by someone and oversight has a different meaning. Errors occur to some performance aspect, such as in attention and carelessness. Learners who make error can make self-corrections. Meanwhile, errors occur when there is incomplete learning of the material target language, so that the learner cannot make self-corrections. In addition, usually students made a mistake only once, but error happen again and again.

Determiner of Nouns

According to Biber, et al., "Determiners are function words used define noun references. This means that the determinant is a word or a group of words that introduce nouns. Based on the position in the noun phrase, Greenbaum and Quirk distinguish three classes of determiners.

- Central determiners, the common of the central determiners are articles (a, an, the), is, that, these, those), and possessive determiners (my, our, your, his, her, its, their).
- Predeterminers, are types of determinants that precede other determinants noun phrase. (eg all, half, both). Usually they are used before the article, demonstrative, and possessive.
- Postdeterminers, is a type of determiner that is placed after central or post determiner and before a noun or head (some, other, first, last, etc). e.g. *all the three students are smart*.

In addition, Mark Lester said that there are four important types determiners: article, demonstrative, possessive, and number. In study countable and uncountable nouns, language learners must also learn them articles and quantifiers.

1. Article

Article is a type specifier used to indicate a type references made by nouns. The most common and basic determinants is a definite article. Additionally, for a definite and indefinite article, it is customary to recognize the zero article.

- The definite article

The definite article, the, can be used with all kinds of common nouns with singular and plural countable nouns with noncount nouns.

Here he example:

Singular count nouns	Plural count nouns	Nount count nouns
<i>the table</i>	<i>the tables</i>	<i>the furniture</i>
<i>the ring</i>	<i>the rings</i>	<i>the jewelry</i>
<i>the cat</i>	<i>the cars</i>	<i>the traffic</i>

In addition, the use of certain articles partially depends on the previous text and partly on general pragmatic knowledge.

For example: *A dead cat on the road. The cat that died on the street is mine.*

- The indefinite article

The indefinite article a/an is used with singular countable nouns. as in an example of this: Susan has a dog. The second form of the indefinite article used before vowel sound. For example: an apples, an hour, an orange, etc. Besides that, The indefinite article can also be used in contexts where the noun phrase does not refer to any particular individual.e.g. *Siti feels terrible. She needs a friend.*

The example above makes it clear that Siti needs a friend, but she doesn't know it who she/he is. So, the reference from the example above is the new unspecified entity.

- The zero article

The zero article is used with countable nouns and plurals. It is also used where the focus is on the type of institution rather than the specifics unity.

2. Quantifiers

A quantifier is a word or phrase used to talk about quantities, amounts or degree. Some quantity expressions are used only with countable nouns, some only with uncountable nouns, and some with either countable or uncountable nouns. Quantifiers can be broadly divided into four main groups:

- *Inclusive*

All, both, each and every included. *All* refers to the whole group or mass. It can be used with both countable and uncountable nouns. *Both* are used by referring to two entities with a countable plural noun. *Each* and *every* refer to the individual member of group and only combine with singular countable nouns. *Each* stresses separate individual, *every* the individual as a member of the group. *Each* can be used with the reference to two entities, but not *every*. For instances: 1). *All* the birds flew away. 2). *We both* need a break. 3). *Each* dress is beautiful. 4). I read two hours of newspapers *every* day.

- *Large quantity*

Many and Much define a large quantity. many used with plural countable nouns, whereas much is used with uncountable nouns. other numerator a large quantity are a lot of, plenty of, lots of (combine with both plural countable and uncountable nouns).

For example: 1). There are *many* things to do today. 2). How *much* sugar do you add? 3). She plays *a lot of* sport. 4). Moderate or small quantity.

Some usually specifies a moderate quantity and is used both countable and uncountable nouns. The other determiners that specify a small quantity are a few, few, and several with plural countable; and a little and little with uncountable. Few and a few, little and a little are slightly different. A *few* and a little imply more item than few and little. "*Few and little* indicate that something is largely absent."

For example :1). I want to buy *some* books. 2). I spent *a few* days in the park. 3). *Few* people attended the meeting. 4). There was little time to finish it

- *Arbitrary/negative member or amount*

Any refers to an arbitrary group member or mass number. She combined with countable and uncountable nouns. Any is primarily used in negative context. For example: 1). There isn't any butter, 2). We don't have any money

Definition of Writing

According to Gelb (1963) writing is expressed not by the objects themselves but by the creations of objects or other materials. Written symbols are usually done through hand motor movements in drawing, painting, making lines, or inscribing. In addition, Peha (2003) also adds that writing is actually two activities combined into one. The first activity involves coming up with ideas that you plan to write about. The second involves writing down those ideas in a way that is interesting and understandable to you readers. In short, writing is a complex activity that involves generating ideas and thoughts through words. On the other hand, Brown (2004) adds that writing is the main convention for recording speech and for strengthening the grammatical and lexical features of language. Furthermore, Hawkins (2005) shows that writing is about pouring information and thoughts into words on paper. Meanwhile, Harmer (2004), writing is often useful as a preparatory activity, especially when students write sentences as an opening for discussion activities.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Analysis uses descriptive qualitative methods to identify students' mistakes in writing descriptive text. In this study, researchers collect samples, identify, classify, and evaluate student errors. Writing descriptive text with countable and uncountable nouns analyzed and explained. This study uses a case study for its design. According to Meshek (1998), a case study is a description of one case. Case study is a type of research that focuses on issues, events, and how they found. Students often make this mistake when writing the procedure text includes both countable and uncountable nouns, so we checked them out to see what is the error. This research was designed in the form of qualitative research, especially with descriptive methods.

Subject of The Study

Technic of Data Collection

To get the data, the researcher used a written test. Brown (2004) states that the test is a method to measure a person's ability, knowledge, or performance in a particular domain.

In this study, participants were asked to write descriptive texts of about 50-100 words or about two paragraphs with a minimum of five sentences in each paragraph, by looking at each student's dictionary, within forty minutes. The researcher distributed 24 pictures according to the number of people in class VIII-A there were 24 students, pictures representing countable and uncountable nouns.

Technique of Data Analysis

In this study the researcher followed the Error Analysis procedure by Ellis (1997), the error analysis procedure was as follows;

A. Collection of learners' language samples

Collecting learners' language samples provides data for error analysis. The researcher needs to be aware that the nature of the sample collected can affect the nature and distribution of observed errors.

B. Identification of errors

In this step, the researcher studied the data obtained and tried to find errors in the use of countable and uncountable nouns in writing student descriptive texts by underlining the errors.

C. Classification of Errors

After highlighting errors in students' descriptive text writing, the researcher tried to classify errors based on the surface structure taxonomy by Dullay, Burt, and Kashens (1982). This includes types of

Population

Arikunto (1997) states that the population is the total number of subjects or people observed in a study. The population in this study were students in class VIIIA of SMP Negeri 2 Muara for the 2022/2023 academic year. There are 4 classes, namely VIIIA, VIIIB, VIIC, VIID, a total of 102 students.

Sample

The sample selection technique is random sampling technique. With random sampling, all populations have the same opportunity to be selected according to the purpose as stated by Arikunto (1997): Random sampling is the best way to obtain a representative sample. If the population is more than 100, the sample size is 10%-15% or 20%-25%. The sample of this research is 15% of the total population, so the sample is 24 students

errors, namely omissions, additions, misformations and misorders. In this step, the researcher tries to explain how and why countable and uncountable nouns are called incorrect.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Data Analysis

The data analysis of study are identification and classification of countable and uncountable noun errors in descriptive texts written by eight grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Muara, the frequency of each number of countable and uncountable noun errors in the text descriptive text written by eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Muara

Identification and Classification of Countable and Uncountable Noun Errors

This researcher aims to find errors in the formation of countable and uncountable nouns in writing descriptive texts written by eighth grade of SMP Negeri 2 Muara. After collecting the data, the researcher found several errors in the descriptive text written by the students. There are 17 error items found in students' descriptive writing. The researcher provides all of these sentences and phrases in Table 4.1 below, accompanied by the types of errors in each sentence or phrase. Faults are classified based on surface structure taxonomy by Dullay. They; omissions, additions, and misformation and missordering.

Tabel 4.1 Identification and Classification of Errors

No	Identified Sentence and Phrase	Types of Errors
1	An pineapple	Misformation
2	There are two avocado*	Omission
3	This chair* is very soft	Omission
4	Has a lot* of vitamin C	Omission
5	Seven fishes	Misformation
6	I like to eat a cheese	Misformation
7	Countain a lot* of nutrions	Omission
8	It have long hairs	Addition
9	There are three ice cream	Misformation
10	Seven bread	Misformation
11	A apple	Misformation
12	In basket ball* game	Omission
13	I drink two coffee everyday	Misformation
14	The banana* has yellowish skin	Omission
15	A very healthy fruits	Addition
16	My cat eats much fish and water everyday	Misformation
17	This is a rice	Addition

a. Analysis Error Omission
“Chairs”

In this picture i see 5 chairs made of iron some are red, blue, black, light blue and brown the purpose is for us to sit on and the seat of this chairsis made of soft cotton i feel that *this chair is very soft* to sit on.

based on the data above, students make mistakes in omission, students don't put -s in plural nouns.like the example above,
student answer : this chair is very soft

it should be : this chairs is very soft

b. Analysis Error Misformation
“ice cream”

in this picture *I see three pieces of ice cream* the ice cream has a drinik color white and brown where the ice cream is brown the ice cream has a sweet and cold taste so when we eat it in hot weather it is very suitable and when we eat ice cream in cold weather we will couqh.

in the data above students make mistakes in misformation, from these data find errors in the use of plural uncountable nouns. The error indicates that the student is unable to place the countable unit in the plural form to express the number of uncountablenouns. This can be seen from the sentence students answer : "I see thereee pieces of ice cream" it should be : "there are three scopes of ice cream" because ice cream is an uncountable noun, so a countable unit is needed to express its quantity.

c. Analysis Error Addition
“Rice”

This is a rice, rice is a staple food tastes sweet usually used for breakfast or can be used for lunch the color of rice is white it can also be used as a substitute for glue it is usually eaten with a side this a side dish of rice usually peoples food is very soft.

based on the data above students make mistakes in Addition like the example above,found an error in adding an article a/an before uncountable where the article a/an should not appear before an uncountable noun.

Student answer : "this is a rice"

It should be : "this is rice".

Error in Omission

Tabel 4.2 Omissions Errors

Types of error	Identified sentence	Countable noun	Uncountable noun
Omission	1.This chair is very soft	√	
	2.In basket ballgame	√	
	3.There are two avocado	√	
	4.Countain a lot of nutrients		√
	5.The banana has yellowish skin	√	
	6.Has a lot of vitamin C		√
Total	6	4	2

From the data above, there are 6 errors found in omissions. All of these errors are found in the omission of –s in the use of plural forms of countable and uncountable nouns. There is 2 error found in the plural form of uncountable nouns. For example, in the sentence “..countain a lot of nutrients” instead of “..countain a lots of nutrients” in that sentence nutrients is an uncountable noun so it needs quantifier to make the plural form, and in that sentence used teaspoon for the quantifier. However, in the sentence above countain a lot of nutrients but the students did not add –s in the end of the quantifier. In the sentence,

“..has a lot of vitamin C” instead of “..has a lots of vitamin C”.

Then, 4 omission errors were found in the plural of countable nouns. They don't put –s in plural nouns. For example in sentences, “there are two avocado” instead of “there are two avocados”, in the sentence “this chair is very soft” instead of “this chairs is very soft”, in the sentence “in basketball game” instead of “in basketballs game”, in the sentence “the banana has yellowish skin” instead of “the bananas has yellowish skin

Error in misformation

Tabel 4.3 Misformation Errors

Types of error	Identified sentence	Countable noun	Uncountable noun
Misformation	An pineapple	√	
	1. My cat eats much fish and water everyday	√	
	2. Seven breads		√
	3.A apple	√	
	4.Seven fishs	√	
	5.I drink two coffee everyday		√
	6.I like to eat a cheese		√
	7.There are three ice cream		√
Total	7	3	4

From the data above there are 7 errors found in misformation. Of all these errors, 4 errors were found in the use of countable nouns and 4 errors in the formation of uncountable nouns.

In the use of countable nouns, there is 1 error found in the misplacement of the quantifier “much” in a countable form. For example in the sentence, “ my cat eats much fish and water everyday” instead of “my cat eats lots of fish and water everyday”. The quantifier *much* cannot be placed in units that can be counted, so it must be replaced with a quantifier *lots of* that can be used for both countable and uncountable nouns.

Furthermore , 2 errors were also found in the placement of the an/a article. Students use the indefinite article an before a word that begins with a consonant. For example, “an pinneapple” instead of “a pinneapple”. Students are confused about which article to use in a sentence, they put the indefinite article a in front of a word that begins with a vowel, as in a sentence “a apple” instead of “an apple”.

Then, students also made mistakes in adding –s which should be –es after the plural of countable nouns. For example in sentences, “..seven fishs..” instead of “..seven fishses..”.

Another 4 errors are the use of uncountable nouns. From these errors, 3 errors were found in the use of plural uncountable nouns. The error indicates that the student is unable to place countable units in the plural to express the number of uncountable nouns. It can be seen from the sentence, “..seven breads..” instead of “..seven slices of bread..”, the sentence, “ there are three ice cream” instead of “there are three scopes of ice cream” because ice cream is an uncountable noun, a countable unit is needed to express the quantity. In the sentence, “I drink two coffee everyday” instead of “ I drink three cups coffee everyday”.

Error in Addition**Table 4.4 addition errors**

Types of error	Identified sentence	Countable noun	Uncountable noun
Addition	1.It have long hairs		√
	2.A very healthy fruits	√	
	3.This is a rice		√
Total	3	1	2

From the data above, there were 3 errors found. 1 found an error in adding an article a/an before uncountable where the article a/an should not appear before an uncountable noun. For example in the sentence, “*this is a rice*” instead of “*this is rice*”.

1 error found in addition of –s in uncountable units. For example, “*it have long hairs*” instead of “*it has long hair*” This sentence is wrong because hair is an uncountable noun, so we can't add –s to the end of a word.

In the use of countable nouns there is 1 error adding –s to the singular countable noun. In sentences, “*..a very healthy fruits..*” instead of “*a very healthy fruit..*” in the first phrase there is an article a which represents a type of fruit so that noun fruit does not need to emphasize -s on noun fruit.

Interpretation**Table 4.5 Frequency of Errors (Countable and Uncountable Noun)**

Error type	Countable noun	Uncountable noun	Total
Omission	4	2	6
Misformation	4	4	8
Addition	1	2	3
Missordering			
Total	9	8	17

In addition, this study revealed that the categories of errors in the use of countable and uncountable nouns that were most often made by students of class VIII-A of SMP Negeri 2 Muara were errors in misformation, there were as many as eight errors and the lowest error was made by students with error addition, there were as many as 3 errors.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**Conclusion**

Based on the data described in the previous chapter, the authors conclude that class VIII students at SMP Negeri 2 Muara are still confused about using countable and uncountable nouns, especially in the plural form of uncountable nouns. Data analysis showed that students made mistakes in writing descriptive

Second, the main causes of mistakes made by students of SMP Negeri 2 Muara are: 1) they are still confused about which ones are included in countable nouns and uncountable nouns 2) they do not understand the rules of countable and uncountable nouns.

Suggestion

Based on the research results above, some suggestions are addressed to students and teachers of English.

For Students

There are several suggestions for students related to research results. First, students must improve their understanding of English grammar, especially in forming or distinguishing countable and uncountable nouns. Second, there are slightly complicated rules in forming countable and uncountable nouns and both have different rules, so students must really understand and remember the differences between countable and uncountable nouns. Third, excellent students improve their writing skills by understanding the material and writing given or explained by the teacher in class and also practicing writing regularly both in class and at home which is useful for recognizing mistakes made by students.

For Teachers of English

It is suggested for teachers to analyze the mistakes made by students in English grammar it is useful for teachers to understand difficult students, furthermore teachers can help their students better. The teacher also prefers or takes various teaching methods that are most effective in teaching English grammar which will help students in learning materials, the teacher must also re-examine students in their work and provide feedback to students in asking questions or giving opinions. They can choose interesting ways such as games or pictures to motivate students to study better.

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