THE ANALYSIS OF THE STUDENTS' ERRORS IN USING SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE IN WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXTS ENTITLED "MY FAMILY"

Dewi Wulandari
Politeknik Unggul Medan
Jl.Iskandar Muda No.3 CDEF Medan
dewiwulandari1984@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This research aimed to analyze and to describe the errors in using simple present tenses in writing descriptive texts made by students, especially the eighth grade class at SMP Perguruan Gajah Mada Medan. The data were obtained by conducting a test and using a checklist. Then, the writing products were analyzed using Surface Strategy Taxonomy by Dulay (1982). The result of this research was presented descriptively. From the result, the misformation errors were found as the highest of occurrence, which was about 39,54% which revealed that the eight graders class still made errors in using simple present tense in writing descriptive text entitled "My Family". .

Key words: Analyze, Errors, Simple Present Tense, Writing, Descriptive Text

INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, English is one of the subjects in the formal education. English has been taught from primary to secondary school, whether only as extracurricular subject or compulsory subject. In secondary schools, especially in Junior High Schools, English has been established as a required subject. It is based on the Decree of Education Ministry no.24, 2006 about School Based Curriculum and Standard of Content.

On the other hand, English is still considered as Foreign Language in Indonesia. Therefore, it is possible for Indonesian students to find difficulties in learning English. Moreover, there are four aspects in English that should be learned and mastered by the students. The four aspects are listening, speaking, reading and writing. One of the four language aspects is writing skill. Writing is an activity of expressing messages, ideas and information in written form. Therefore, writing is considered as the most difficult aspect to learn because by writing, the writers or learners deliver their thoughts into words in a written form.

In Indonesian formal education, the 2006 Standard of Content of Junior High School states that writing competence includes the competence in writing short text such as procedure, descriptive, narrative, recount, and report text. Junior High School students are expected to be able to practice and express their short and simple ideas, messages, and information in written forms for interaction with people in their environment by writing. But now, writing activities is rarely done in class because the school and the teacher think that writing activity will waste the time and reduce the length of time allotment. While, writing activity is considered as the students' way to express the feeling, to inform more information and to deliver more ideas. Also, by writing activity, the students not only apply the vocabulary that they have but also apply the structure or grammar that they have learnt. And the essential thing is by writing, a teacher can analyze what errors that the students make when the students produce a text.

Based on information obtained from the English teacher at SMP Perguruan Gajah Mada Medan, it was found that many students still make errors in grammar, especially in using Simple Present Tense in writing descriptive text. In the interview with the English teacher, it is known that the eight grade class is the class which has low ability in using Simple Present Tense especially in using subject-verb agreement, adverb and usage. The students could not use the subject-verb agreement and usage; it is known that the ability of the students in using Simple Present Tense was low. It is found that many students often did not understand why some sentences used auxiliaries, *is, am*, and *are* instead of auxiliaries *do* and *does*.

All the problems above arose since the students did not understand the right rule of Simple Present Tense. In relation to this problems, the researcher is interested in conducting a research which

is focused on The Analysis of Students' Error in Using Simple Present Tense in Writing Descriptive Text at the Eight Grade Students at SMP Perguruan Gajah Mada Medan in the Accademic Year of 2017/2018

1. Objectives of the Research

The objectives of the research was to analyze and to describe the students errors in using Simple Present Tense in Writing Descriptive Text at the Eight Grade Students at SMP Perguruan Gajah Mada Medan in the Accademic Year of 2017/2018

2. Significance of the Research

The result of the research is expected to give some benefits theoretically and practically to the readers and writer. Practically, the researcher hopes that the result can be the references for the students or teacher. The result of this research is expected to provide the information and evaluation for the students, so the students could try to avoid the same mistakes next time. Also, this research is expected to be useful for the teacher to improve the students' writing skill by analyzing the error of simple present tense. Theoretically, this research is expected to be able to provide the information of the students' error of simple present tense in teaching learning process.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

1. Error Analysis

Learning foreign language such as English does not the same as learning first language or mother tongue. Learning mother tongue or first language is not influenced by other language but it is different for students who Learn English; the process of learning is influenced by their mother tongue as their first language and it causes an error and mistake in learning. The learners will make mistakes in the process of acquisition and these mistakes will disturb that process if she or he does not correct the errors. Therefore, the researcher and teachers, in this case English teachers, come to realize that the mistakes and error which a person made in the process of constructing a new system of language needs to be analyzed carefully. This analysis becomes the key to the understanding of the process of foreign language acquisition. This analysis is well-known as error analysis.

1.1. The Meaning of Error

According to Richard (1990:95), error is the use of linguistic item (e.g. a word, grammatical item, a speech act, etc) in a way which a fluent or native speaker of the language regards as showing faulty or incomplete learning. Errors are sometimes classified according to vocabulary (lexical error), pronunciation (phonological error), grammar (syntactic error), misunderstanding of a speaker intention or meaning (interpretative error), production of the wrong communicative effect. In the research of second and foreign language learning, errors have been studied to discover the processes learners make use of in learning and using a language.

1.2. The Difference Between Error and Mistake

According to Brown(2007:257) notes that it is crucial to make a distinction between mistake and error. A mistake refers to a performance error that is either a random guess or a "slip", in that it is a failure to utilize a known system correctly. All people make mistakes, in both native and second language situation. Native speakers are normally capable of recognizing and correcting mistakes. Errors occur when the learners fail to perform their competence. While an error in the technical sense takes place when the deviation arises as a result of lack of knowledge. It represents a lack of competence. Errors which are caused by memory lapses, physical status such as tiredness and psychological condition such as strong emotion, or by slips of the tongue, are called mistake. Meanwhile, Gass and Salinker in Brown (2007: 259) states that error analysis fails to account for the strategy of avoidance learner who for one reason or another avoids a particular sound, word, structure, or discourse category may be assumed incorrectly to have no difficulty therewith.

Based on the explanation above, the difference between error and mistake can be drawn is that error refers to competence on systematic or the process, whereas mistake refers to performance, and it is unsystematic.

1.3. Types of Errors in Errors Analysis

To categorize error into classification based on the types or the sources of errors is not easy work. Many times error cannot be traced back into one source. Moreover, the boundaries between different sources of many errors are sometimes unclear that the arbitrary classification decision unavoidable.(Dulay,1982: 145) in Anwar defines error analysis as an analytical tool, as are the specification of transitional constructions, the computation of acquisition orders and the delineation of special utterances types.

a. Omission

Omission is characterized by the absence of an item that must appear in well-formed utterance. However between content words and function words, language learner more frequently omits the letter. Examples: *Toni know about Indonesia.* It should be *"Toni knows about Indonesia"*

b. Addition

This error is the opposite of omission. They are characterized by the presence of an item which must not appear in a well formed utterance. Examples: *"He doesn't knows my name".* It should be *"He doesn't know my name."*

c. Mis-formation

It is characterized by the use of the wrong form of the morpheme or structure. In formation errors, the learner supplies something although it is not correct. Examples: *This cats.*

d. Misordering

Misordering errors are categorized by the incorrect placement of a morpheme or group of morpheme in an utterance. This kind of errors occurs when learners wrongly place the sequence of words in the sentence. Examples: I bought a dictionary new last week. (I bought a new dictionary last week).

1.4. Cause of Errors

According to Brown (2007:263) there are four causes of errors. Those are as the following:

a. Interlingual Transfer. It is the beginning stage of learning second language. It is the negative influence of the mother tongue of learner. In this stage, students are not familiar yet with the use of target language, so they use a previous experience when the students learn it.

b. Intralingual transfer. It is the negative transfer of items within the target language. In this stage, students just learn some of the target language, so the students apply the structure into a new form and develop it that does not correspond to target language or mother tongue.

c. Context of learning, it overlaps both types of transfer. In this stage, "context" refers to the teacher or the textbook. In classroom, the teacher or textbook can lead the students to make errors. It can be called"false concept". It is caused there are some errors in teachers explanation or textbook presentation.

d. Communication strategies, in this stage, students have to use their production strategies for getting the message.

2. Grammar

According to Richards, Platt, and Weber in Nunan (2005:2) grammar is a description of language and the way in which units such as words and phrases are combined to produce sentences in the language. From this definition it seems that grammar plays an important role in combining units of languages to form sentences. The sentences are acceptable or grammatical if they follow the rules of grammar. Since a communicative purpose and function of language are reflected in grammar, it is a must the language students to acquire good grammar. It should be admitted, good mastery in grammar will enable people easily to express information, feelings, and ideas in their thought to others. In other words, it can be said that communication failure will happen if people does not master the grammar because the purpose of communication cannot be reached. From that statement, it is clear that grammar is important to be mastered by the students in order to be able to express their feelings, emotions, and to be able to use English appropriately. Meanwhile, Harmer (2001:12) states that the grammar of a language is a description of the ways in which words can change their forms and can be combined into sentence in that language. In linguistics, grammar is the set of structural rules that govern the composition of clauses, phrases, and words in any given natural language.

Therefore, it is concluded that grammar is the central part of a language that plays an important role in expressing meanings. Grammar is the basic element to understand a sentence. So to research a

language, one must know the structure of that language. Grammar is one of the important components in learning English.

3. Tenses

When the students learn English as foreign language, especially the learning on grammar, tenses become something which seems complicated for the students because when the use of subject must agree with verb form changes. Moreover, the fact that in some languages, including Indonesian language, tense system do not occur when the students learn Indonesian language. So, there is a wrong in the students' thought that learning English is not easy.

There are twelve tenses in English which involve:
1. Simple Present Tense
2. Simple Past Tense
3. Present Continuous Tense
4. Past Continuous Tense
5. Present Perfect Tense
6. Present Perfect Continuous Tense
7. Past Perfect Tense
8. Past Perfect Continuous Tense
9. Simple Future Tense
10. Past Future Tense
11. Future Continuous Tense
12. Future Perfect Tense

4. Simple Present Tense

4.1. Definition of Simple Present Tense

In a particular time, the Simple Present Tense shows clearly that in English tense is not the same is time. The Simple Present Tense is not usually used to describe activities and states which are generally and universally true. The Simple Present Tense is the tense for the description, definition and statements of general truth. Azzar (2000: 2) states that the Simple Present Tense expresses events, perceptions, feelings, or states that occur or exist always, usually, habitually; they exist now, have existed in the past, and probably will exist in the future.

4.2. The Form of Simple Present Tense
  a. Affirmative (+)
     The formula of affirmative sentence in the simple present tense is:
     Subject + verb1+ Complement/ Object. Example: They sweep the floor.
     But, the verb changes when the subject He, She, It become the subject of a sentence. There is an addition"s" or "es". Example: It snows in Alaska.
  b. Negative (-)
     The formula of negative sentence in the simple present tense is:
     Subject+ don't/doesn't+ verb 1+ complement/object. Example: They don't sweep the floor.
     Meanwhile, the auxiliary "doesn't" is used for the subject He, She, It. Example:
     It doesn't snow in Alaska.
  c. Interrogative (?)
     The formula of interrogative sentence in the simple present tense is:
     Do/ does+ subject + verb 1+ complement/object. Example: Do they sweep the floor?
     Or Does it snow in Alaska?

5. Writing

5.1. Definition of Writing

Nunan (2005:98) defines writing as both combination of process and product. The process refers to the act of gathering ideas and working with them until they are presented in a manner that is polished and comprehensible to reader. But writing is the production of graphic symbols, just as speech is more than the production of sounds. The symbols have to be arranged, according to certain conventions, to form words, and words have to be arranged to form sentences.

So, it can be concluded that writing is a process of arranging idea by producing a sequence of sentence arranged in particular orded and linked in certain ways to convey meaning.

5.2. The Components of Writing
The components of writing involve:
a. Vocabulary
According to Nunan (2005:121), vocabulary is the collection of words that an individual knows. The students have a very well developed vocabulary for someone their age in their native language might know the words abstract and dynamic. The students learn vocabulary items related to the different concept they are learning.
b. Grammatical rules/sentence structure
According to Tornbury (2002:1), grammar is partly the research of what form or structures are possible language and a description of the rules that govern how a language's are formed. A lot of exercises and drills are needed to get the learners' habit in grammar correctly. So the learners not only write correct but also make the effective sentence to improve their paragraph.
c. Punctuation
Punctuation is indispensable to careful writing. There is Misused Punctuation, for instance, a question mark instead of a full stop, commas, and so on. The use of Punctuation is important to make a reader to understand the writer means.
d. Spelling
Many of us who are learners of English might agree that most English words are spelled 'strangely'. The learners find the spellings difficult to remember. To spell well is something that cannot be ignored.

6. Descriptive Text
According to Hammond (1992: 78), the social function of descriptive text is to describe a particular person, place, or thing. The generic structures of this text are:
a. To identify the person, place or things to describe.
b. To describe parts, qualities, and characteristics.

Descriptive text has language features; focus on specific rather than generic participants, use of simple present tense, verbs being and having, use of descriptive adjectives to build up long nominal groups. A descriptive text is a text which lists the characteristics of something. The purpose of descriptive text is to:
a. Describe a special place and explain why it is special.
b. Describe the most important person in your live.
c. Describe the animal's habit in your report.

As a feature, descriptive writing is a style of writing which can be useful for other variety of purposes as:
a. To engage a reader's attention.
b. To create characters
c. To set a mood or create an atmosphere
d. To being writing to life
Meanwhile in language function, descriptive writing aims:
a. To show rather than tell the reader what something/someone likes.
b. To rely on precisely chosen vocabulary with carefully chosen adjectives and adverbs.
c. To focus and concentrate only on the aspects which add something to the main purpose of the description.

RESEARCH METHOD
1. Research Design
The researcher used the qualitative method in this research where the researcher analyzed students' writing to identify the type of errors the students did most in their writing and gave questionnaire to know the sources of students' errors.
The subject of this research was the eighth grade class of SMP Perguruan Gajah Mada Medan which consists of 30 students. Meanwhile the source of data was a test. The test was taken from eighth grade students of SMP Perguruan Gajah Mada Medan in Academic Year 2017/2018. The main instrument was the researcher herself. The supporting instrument was writing test and questionnaire.
To analysis the data, the researcher applied descriptive method. In doing the analysis, the researcher did some steps as such as coding the data, identifying the data, classifying the errors based

on the types of errors used and drawing the conclusion and suggestion based on the data analysis. In order to compute the percentage of each error type, the researcher uses this formula as the following:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \; x \; 100\%$$

P : Percentage of error
F : Total of each category
N : Number of total errors occurs

The steps that the writer did to analyze the data from questionnaire were checking the students' responses, tabulating the data and calculating the data. Meanwhile, the steps that the writer did to analyze the data from questionnaire were checking the students' responses, tabulating the data and calculating the data.

RESULT

The result of students' writing errors is presented on the following table:

Table 1 Category of Students' Error

Students	Types of Error			
	Omission	Addition	Misformation	Misordering
S1	2	1	3	0
S2	4	0	4	2
S3	1	0	2	0
S4	1	1	3	0
S5	4	0	4	1
S6	1	0	1	1
S7	1	0	7	1
S8	2	0	2	3
S9	2	2	5	1
S10	2	3	2	1
S11	1	1	0	0
S12	4	1	0	4
S13	5	1	0	2
S14	1	0	3	0
S15	1	2	0	0
S16	1	0	3	2
S17	2	0	3	2
S18	1	1	4	2
S19	1	1	2	0
S20	5	0	2	1
S21	2	0	2	0
S22	2	1	0	0
S23	1	1	5	1
S24	1	1	4	1
S25	1	0	1	1
S26	1	0	2	0
S27	1	2	4	0
S28	2	1	0	0
S29	1	1	2	2
S30	3	0	0	1
TOTAL	57	21	70	29
		177		

Percentage of the Students' error:

1. Omission $= 5\frac{7}{177}$ x 100% = 32,21%
2. Addition $= \frac{21}{177}$ x 100% = 11,87%
3. Misformation $= \frac{70}{177}$ x 100% = 39,54%
4. Misordering $= \frac{29}{177}$ x 100% = 16,39%

DISCUSSION

The table above shows that there are four types of errors. The higher is misformation. From the table above, it can be seen that the most student made errors in misformation with 70 errors on percentage 39.54%. Omission is in second rank with 57 errors on percentage 32.21%. The third is misordering with 29 errors on percentage 16.39%. The last is addition with 19 errors on percentage 11.87%. Meanwhile, the result of questionnaire shows that the reasons why the students made errors in writing descriptive text in using simple present tense. The first reason is interlingual transfer in which the students are not familiar yet with the use of target language, so they used a previous experience when they learn it. The second one is intralingual transfer whereby the students just learn some of the target language, so the students apply the structure into a new form and develop it that does not correspond to target language or mother tongue. Then the third is context of learning, it overlaps both types of transfer. In this stage, "context" refers to the teacher or the textbook. In classroom, the teacher or textbook can lead the students to make errors. It can be called "false concept". It is caused by some errors found in teacher explanation or textbook presentation. And the last one is communication strategies, in this stage, students have to use their production strategies for getting the message.

CONCLUSION

Based on the result of analyzing data, it can be concluded that the types of students' errors in misformation with 70 errors on percentage 39.54%. Omission is in second rank with 57 errors on percentage 32.21%. The third is misordering with 29 errors on percentage 16.39%. The last is addition with 19 errors on percentage 11.87%..The possible factor of the students' error is context of learning. Therefore, it can be said that the students' errors made refer to not only about English grammar but also English vocabulary. It means that errors are made not only by the students but also teacher or other learners.

SUGGESTION

There are a few suggestions after conducting this study. The suggestions are:

1. For the English teacher
   The teacher is expected to motivate his students to improve their English especially writing skill. By knowing what the most students' get errors in to be and word choice, the teacher should know what he/she should do. The teacher should give more understanding and explanation about English grammar and also English vocabulary. And also, teaching learning activity must be improved to get the satisfactory result.
2. For the students
   The students should do more practice in writing English sentences, try to overcome the errors, and learn from the errors. Students' writing will improve if only they can learn from the errors they make.
3. For the reader
   The researcher expects this research may be useful for the reader. Hopefully, this research can be a reference for the learners.

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