

INVESTIGATING JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' ERRORS IN USING ENGLISH PAST TENSE: A LOOK FROM TECHNOLOGICAL AND SOCIOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

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ABSTRACT This study aims at investigating junior high school students' errors in using English past tense in their English compositions. The subjects of this study were 8th-grade students in a junior high school in North Bali. This study employed descriptive qualitative research which describes the error that was produced by EFL learners. There were four steps in collecting the data namely, asking the students to watch a video, telling them to write recount text through guided writing, collecting the learners' writing, identifying the students' errors in writing past tense, and classifying the errors. The data were analysed using Corder's framework to classify students' errors. The study revealed that there were nine types of errors produces by EFL learners. The errors are applying Indonesian syntactic pattern, using Indonesian acronym, omitting the plural marker -s, adding plural marker -s in a singular form, deleting BE, using incorrect word choice, adding articles, overgeneralising, and using incorrect word order. The errors show that the students tend to use their native language structure in composing the English past tense. Hence, the errors made by students and acknowledged by teachers should be addressed immediately by implementing appropriate strategies and materials to enhance learning. Furthermore, this study can be conducted for further research with different subjects as well as references for applied linguistics courses.

Keywords: error analysis, technological foundation, sociological foundation

A. INTRODUCTION

Writing is an effective interaction to deliver ideas to others (Zuhri & Sukarnianti, 2015). Writing has various functions, such as to persuade, infuriate, tell, and report (Saragih, Silalahi, 2014). Boardman (2008), stated that in producing good writing, there are three characteristics that need to be fulfilled. First, coherence, it is forming well-structured sentences, where the thesis statement in the paragraph is well understood. Thus, readers can easily read the paragraph. Second, cohesion, it is the grammatical and lexical linking that a paragraph creates clear meaning. Third, unity, it is the supporting sentences that are connected with the topic sentence. In English, there are sixteen tenses, and it was revealed that in learning English as a foreign language, tenses were one of the most problematic language

aspects for Indonesian students (Fauziati, 2017; Kusumawardani & Adnyani, 2020; Maheswari, Adnyani & Suwastini, 2020; Pratiwi, Adnyani, & Putra, 2020; Suwastini, Adnyani, & Wiraningsih, 2020) Tense is a verb that may be used to signify the time of the action or expression (Gupta, 2006). In this study, how students construct past tense in their English composition is investigated. Bradeley (2015) stated that simple past tense is used to indicate an action started and finished in the past.

Puspika and Narius (2014) stated simple past tense indicates a past action occurred at a definite time in the past, whether that time is stated or not. In regular forms, suffix -ed is attached to the verb. In writing a recount text, simple past is commonly used. Recount text is written to report about an activity that has been completed (Knapp, 2005). However, for language learners in middle school, they are still at the beginner level who start learning to write when they were in fourth-grade in elementary school. As EFL learners, they find it somewhat problematic to write and translate the target language at the same time. Thus, learners produce some errors. The errors can be in terms of the structure of the sentence and the lexical use in the sentence. Indonesian structure, tenses does not exist. There is not any change of verbs related to the time of events. Thus, when the students compose an English sentence, they might be influenced by the structure of their native language.

Errors can be found in terms of grammar, spelling, and word order (Hamid & Qayyimah, 2014). EFL learners are experiencing an error in English sentence because of the interference of their Indonesian language and English language (Syaripuddin, 2015). Asking the students to write sentences freely can be a possible way to build and develop the students' creative writing skills. Creative writing clearly can play a pivotal role in the establishment of writing skills (Hamid & Qayyimah, 2014). Therefore, the teachers make various media or tools to make the teaching-learning process more interesting, especially in writing courses. There were several studies conducted related to error analysis in using the simple past tense. Sari (2019) conducted an error analysis in writing the sentence of simple past tense on English subject. The study was aimed to investigate the types of errors made by students in writing the simple past tense in English. The result of this study shows that there were four types of errors. The errors are found in the use of the suffix -ed, -d in regular verbs, the use of irregular verbs, the use of negation, and the application of BE.

Anjarani & Indahwati (2019) did a study on errors made by EFL learners in using simple past tense in translating narrative text. The result reveals that there were four kinds of errors, such as omission errors, addition errors, missed formation errors, and missed ordering errors. The teachers recommended making a clear understanding related to differentiating grammatical

differences between Indonesia and English. The other study was conducted by Chachu (2016), who conducted a study on errors made by French students. The study was done in a group of 100 students (18 to 20 years old) who had training in English and are comfortable using the language as communication. The result presents some errors in the oral and written production of the students in terms of the lexical, the limitation of vocabulary or expressions, conjugation in present tense and present continuous tense in English.

Another study conducted by Muhsin (2016) investigated the learners' errors in using the simple present tense. This study showed that the learners produced four types of errors, namely, omission errors, additional errors, missed formation errors, and improper ordering errors. Thus, the study showed that the use of a journal could improve students' writing skills due to the learners' build and express their creative thinking and opinion in their writing. Another study conducted by Setyaningrum (2018) described error analysis in the use of simple past tense on students' final work at IAIN Kudus. This study reveals that there were four types of errors made by the students, such as omission, addition, misformation, and misordering.

Students' language error is a common phenomenon that is inevitable in learning new languages. This triggered researchers to dig out some factors that might influence language learners' sentence production in the target language. Most of the researches did analyses on language learners' writing since it provides concrete data. Besides, learners' writing is chosen to be analysed because it gives more time and opportunity for learners to think thoroughly the sentences they are about to produce (Luna, 2010). The current study focused on analysing the types of language error made by junior school students in their writing production. Therefore, the objectives of the recent study are 1) to describe the types of language error in students' writing production, 2) to describe the implementation of educational foundation as the basis for teachers in teaching English past tense.

B. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Error analysis

Error analysis is a kind of process to observe, analyse and classify the errors made by the students in learning a foreign language. According to Crystal (1999) error analysis is the study of the unacceptable forms produced by someone learning a language, especially a foreign language. Meanwhile, James (2001) defines error analysis is the study of linguistic ignorance, the investigation of what people do not know and how they attempt to cope with their ignorance. Corder (1973) classifies EFL learners' errors in terms of the differences between their utterance and the reconstructed version. Based on this, he classifies errors into four categories: omission,

selection, addition, or misordering of some element. According to Corder (1973) this kind of classification can help the teacher diagnose learners' problem in constructing utterances or sentences, thus can find a way to provide feedback.

According to Ellis (1994) error analysis is carried out in four consecutive stages, namely collection of a sample of learner language, identification of errors, description of errors, and explanation of errors. Amara (2015) drew and categorised types of errors from Corder (1974) and Scovel (2001) into two, namely interlingual interference and intralingual interference. Interlingual interference is the errors caused by learners' mother tongue interference. Intralingual interference occurs because of the difficulty of the target language itself. Intralingual error is also called developmental error. Intralingual errors are categorised into over-generalisation, simplification, communication base, induced errors, analogical errors, ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of rules, and false hypothesis.

Corder (1967) mentioned there are four types of error, namely, the omission of BE, verbal marker -s, and -ed, selection, addition, and improper ordering of the sentences. An omission is when the writer omits the suffix -s, -ed, and BE in a lexical (Al-khresheh, 2016). For example, the omission of BE can be found in 'My favourite colour red'. In this sentence, the writer needs to put BE in the sentence. Thus, the sentence should be 'My favourite colour is red'. Selection is when the words used in sentences are not appropriate. Addition is the use of an article for specific or a particular noun. The last is improper ordering which is misplacing the lexical in the sentence. Richard et. al (1985) states that error analysis is a study of errors made by interlanguage person who is learning the second and foreign language. However, in contrast to the opinion of Brown (1980) states that error analysis is kind of process of observing, analysing, and clarifying the deviations of the rule of the second or target language to reveal the structure operated by the learner correctly. Error analysis occurs is not a source of error from the mother tongue.

The term interlanguage proposed by Selinker in 1972 refers to the student's linguistics system, which is distinct from the learner's first language in this case (Indonesian language) and target language (English). It defines the type of language generated by English as foreign language learners who are in the process of learning the target language. It also reflects the students' journey from their first language to the acquisition of the second language. It is considered as a third language that is unique to particular students that represent a system that has a structurally secondary status between the first language and second language. Sharwood-Smith (1994) defined interlanguage as the systematic linguistic behaviour of students of other

languages. While for the word 'language' suggests interlanguage as a separate linguistic system that has different characteristics, the student's first language and second language.

Simple Past Tense

Azar (1992) explains that the simple past tense is used to talk about activities or situations which began and ended at a particular time in the past. The following sentence is an example of simple past tense.

'When the teacher came to the classroom, the students took the books.'

The first clause is the time clause. It tells an activity that began first. Then, the second clause is the main clause. The main clause tells that the second activity happened after the previous activity. As mentioned previously that the simple past tense is used to express one action happening at a particular time in the past. Besides, it also used to tell repeated or habitual actions in the past. The signals which are usually used in the simple past are yesterday, last, ago.

C. METHOD

It is a descriptive study that focuses on language error experienced by junior high school students in their writing production. It explores the types of error in their writing. The study was conducted in a junior high school in Bali. The subjects of the study were 8th-grade students of junior high school in North Bali who have learned English as a foreign language for four years through formal education. The object of this study was the learners' language errors in using simple past tense, and it is seen from technological and sociological foundations. In collecting the data, EFL learners were asked to write recount text through guided writing with the theme 'My activity last Sunday'.

In analysing the data, the framework of error analysis was used. Error analysis is used to analyse the forms and causes of language errors. Corder (1982) said that error analysis studies the characteristics of the second language learners' errors and confirms or disproves the predictions of contrastive analysis. In this study, the errors were listed and classified into the first language (Bahasa Indonesia) and target language (English). The EFL learners were also asked to follow the steps in making recount text. Then, the data will be analysed through the error analysis framework by James (2014) to find out whether the language error influenced by the first language (Bahasa) or the target language (English).

D. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study tries to look at the learners' errors generated by junior high school students in North Bali. There were nine types of students' errors in their writing production, namely 1)

using Indonesian syntactic pattern; 2) Indonesian acronym; 3) the omission of plural marker -s; 4) adding -s in a singular form; 5) BE deletion, 6) wrong selection of words choice; 7) the addition of an article, 8) overgeneralisation of past form -ed; 9) and improper ordering.

Using Indonesian syntactic pattern

The first types of learners' errors in using simple past tense were using Indonesian syntactic pattern. The students under study have been studying English since they were in the fourth grade of elementary school. It is expected that they have acquired adequate English vocabulary. Thus, they relied on their knowledge of English vocabularies and tried to use relevant vocabularies to convey the message they wanted to deliver. However, in constructing the English sentences, the students adopted the pattern of Indonesian sentence. Examples of the use of Indonesian structure can be found in examples (1) and (2).

(1) Over there I with my brother played sand

Disana, saya bermain pasir dengan saudara laki-laki saya

'There, I played sand with my brother.'

(2) I want to slept the bedroom

Saya ingin tidur dikamar.

'I want to sleep in my room.'

Indonesian Acronym

Another native language influence is the use of Indonesian words (Indonesian acronym). Examples (3)-(5) show the use of Indonesian acronym.

(3) I went to *Pantai* Lovina

Saya pergi ke pantai Lovina.

'I went to Lovina beach.'

(4) Many *wisatawan* in pantai Lovina

Banyak wisatawan di pantai Lovina.

' Many tourists in Lovina beach.'

(5) I went to *Danau* Beratan with my brother

Saya pergi ke Danau Beratan dengan saudara laki-laki saya.

I went to Beratan Lake with my brother

The word *Pantai* is an Indonesian term referring to 'beach', while *Danau* is 'Lake'. These words can be categorised as specific Indonesian lexical that the students are bounded to. It is understandable since the speakers might not be able to find the English equivalence for those words due to limited vocabulary. Thus, they had difficulties in translating those terms into English. This finding supports the study conducted by Fauziati (2017), who found that most native language influences occurred on vocabulary where students use Indonesian words or terms to replace the English ones.

Omission of the plural marker -s

The students omit suffix -s in plural form. English and Indonesian have different plural markers. In English, a plural marker –s or –es is attached to the noun. In Indonesian language, on the other hand, there are no plural affixes attached to nouns. Instead of adding affixes, to mark plural form, the nouns are repeated such as *mobil-mobil* 'cars', *pohon-pohon* 'trees', *anak-anak* 'children'. Besides, in Indonesian, to indicate plural form is shown with the numbers preceding the noun or using words indicating amount as in *banyak anak* 'many children', *beberapa orang* 'several people'. the omission of plural marker -s can be seen in examples (6) and (7).

- (6) I saw many fish in *pantai* Lovina.
Saya melihat banyak ikan di Pantai Lovina.
'I saw a lot of fishes in Lovina beach.'

- (7) My brother bring two sandal.
Kakak laki-laki saya membawa dua sandal.
'My brother brought two sandals.'

Adding -s in a singular form

In English structure, the singular form does not need suffix -s. Examples of adding plural marker -s in singular forms can be found in examples (8)-(10).

- (8) Last week, I cook fried rices.
Minggu lalu, saya memasak nasi goreng.
'Last week, I cooked fried rice.'

- (9) I buy a apples.
Saya beli sebuah apel.

'I bought an apple.'

(10) She got a presents.

Dia mendapat hadiah.

'She got a present.'

BE deletion

Another type of error is BE deletion. Contrary to the native language influence, where the speakers tend to think in Indonesian pattern, in this case, the speakers have an English pattern mindset where all the sentences should be added with BE. Thus, many students add BE in the sentences that they produced, which are incorrect in a particular context. The students have omitted the use of BE. Thus, they have produced an ill form of English sentence. Examples (11) and (12) show where students omitted BE in their sentences.

(11) My activity yesterday cooking and playing

Aktivitas saya kemarin adalah memasak dan bermain.

'Yesterday, I was cooking and playing.'

(12) There festival at that time

Ada sebuah pameran pada saat itu.

'There was a festival at that time.'

Similar in meaning

The students put two words in a sentence, which has the same meaning. For example, EFL learners were confused with the use of 'go', 'went', and 'gone'. Those verbs are irregular verb which is used based on the tenses. The learners think that 'go' and 'went' have different meanings. The EFL learners use the same verb in one sentence, both in English and Indonesian. The correct sentence should be 'I went to the river'. This sentence is written in past tense, which indicates telling the past even. The use of words which have a similar meaning in one sentence can be seen in examples (13) and (14).

(13) I went to go river

Saya pergi ke sungai.

'I went to the river.'

(14) Last Sunday, I went to go the my house grandmother

Minggu lalu, saya pergi ke rumah nenek.

'Last Sunday, I went to my grandmother's house.'

Addition of an article

The next errors identified in the students writing is adding an article which is not necessary as can be seen in example (15) and (16).'

(15) After the me and my family

'Setelah saya dan keluarga saya'

'After my family and I'

(16) Me very happy because the mother invite swimming

Saya sangat senang karena Ibu mengajak saya berenang.

'I'm very happy because my mother asked me to swim.'

The sentences above showed that the learners put an article before a noun; they think that every noun should begin with an article. Thus, the learner produces ill form in composing English sentence. In English, the use of 'the' is for specific thing for an example to indicate particular nouns. An example of the use of an article in the particular noun is 'Let's read the magazine.' This sentence tells that, the speaker is persuading others to read the magazine, not read other books or other magazines. The result of this study is the same as with the previous research conducted by Handayani, Ihsan, & Mirizon (2019). In their research, it was found that syntactic errors, namely subject-verb agreement, tenses, redundancy, article, and pluralisation.

Overgeneralisation of past marker -ed

The students usually attach past marker -ed in irregular verbs. They treat regular and irregular verbs sometimes equally. The errors in attaching past marker -ed in irregular verbs can be seen in examples (17)-(19).

(17) My mother gived me money

Ibu saya memberikan saya uang.

'My mother gave me money.'

(18) I slepted in the bedroom

Saya tidur dikamar.

'I slept in the bedroom.'

(19) Last week I goed to Denpasar

Minggu lalu, saya pergi ke Denpasar.

'Last week, I went to Denpasar.'

Based on the examples above, it can be said that the students know that they should add –ed at the end of the verbs when telling about past events. However, they fail to notice that the irregular form in English does not require the ending –ed. Thus, they used the rule of regular form –ed and applied it in all verbs. The rule of changing the verb is based on the tenses. For the present simple tense should use verb 1, for example, 'I teach the students' meanwhile, for the past tense 'yesterday, I taught the student'.

Improper ordering

Improper ordering errors are characterised by the incorrect placement of a word in an utterance. The examples of improper ordering of students' writing using simple past tense can be seen in examples (20) and (21).

(20) There, me and my mother eat

Disana, saya dan ibu saya makan

'There, my mother and I were eating.'

(21) We go the beach to lunch.

Kita pergi ke pantai untuk makan siang

'We went to the beach for lunch.'

The Implementation of Educational Foundations

Based on the research that has been done, it was found that there were two kinds of educational foundations implemented by the teacher such as technological and sociological foundation. A technological foundation is a technology-rich curriculum that prepares the learners to be aware of technological literacy in the 21st Century environment. This subject is designed to serve a basic skill in all relevant areas of technology, including learning through video, PowerPoint, and other media (Sobolewski, 2015). In this study, the teacher implemented a technological foundation since the teacher showed the students a video in teaching English past tense. However, there was a sociological foundation based on the students' writing. Sociology foundation is an assumption as the basis in education which includes the interaction between the teacher-students, students to students, and students to their school environment (Syatriadin, 2017). This study found that the students were influenced by their social environment in which it affects their language structure. The students still borrowed their

mother tongue language structure in producing the English sentence. Thus errors are produced in composing the English sentence. Students commonly experience errors as natural process of learning a new language.

E. CONCLUSION

Based on the finding and discussion previously, it can be concluded that there were nine types of errors on the use of simple past tense made by the students in their recount text. These errors are using Indonesian syntactic pattern, using Indonesian acronym, the omission of plural marker -s, adding -s in a singular form, BE deletion, using more than one word having similar in meaning, the addition of article 'the', overgeneralisation, and improper ordering. However, the implementation of educational foundations by the teacher such as technological and sociological foundations has been applied. The teacher implemented a technological foundation since the teacher showed the students a video in teaching English past tense. Meanwhile, for the sociological foundation, the students are influenced by their social environment in which affects their language structure. Furthermore, the significance of this research is the teachers will know how to improve students' writing and create some new techniques and strategies to build students' understanding of the English structure. Besides, the teachers are also able to give more exercises to the students so they could gain more understanding about the English structure and reduce the error in their writing. Therefore, for future study, other researchers can conduct the study related to students' writing in terms of the factor that causes the student errors in writing and speech production.

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