AN ERROR ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' GRAMMATICAL STRUCTURES IN TRANSLATING NARRATIVE TEXT

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to discover the errors in students' narrative text translation based on the Surface Strategy Taxonomy. The descriptive qualitative method was used in this research. The populations were the ninth-grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Ambarawa in the academic year 2022/2023. Specifically, 10 students from the IX A class were randomly chosen as the subject. The instrument used was a translation task entitled Kancil dan Buaya. The data was collected by administering the translation test in 90 minutes. Surface Strategy Taxonomy was used to identify the errors in analyzing the data. The results showed that the most frequent error made by students was misformation, while the least common error was misordering. In addition, the component of misformation in which the students made errors the most was the alternating form. Hence, this indicates that the student's English proficiency, mainly in grammar, is still poor. Further researches are suggested to investigate more the causes of errors that occur in students' translation through interviews or questionnaires in order to achieve more in-depth data.

Keywords: *Error analysis; grammar; surface strategy taxonomy; translation*

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui kesalahan dalam terjemahan teks naratif siswa berdasarkan Surface Strategy Taxonomy. Metode deskriptif kualitatif digunakan dalam penelitian ini. Populasi penelitian ini yaitu siswa kelas sembilan SMP Negeri 1 Ambarawa pada tahun akademik 2022/2023. 10 siswa dari kelas IX A dipilih secara acak sebagai subjek. Instrumen yang digunakan adalah tugas terjemahan berjudul Kancil dan Buaya. Pengumpulan data yaitu melalui tes terjemahan selama 90 menit. Dalam menganalisis data, Surface Strategy Taxonomy digunakan untuk mengidentifikasi kesalahan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kesalahan yang paling sering dilakukan oleh siswa adalah misformasi sedangkan kesalahan paling jarang adalah kesalahan pengurutan yang salah. Selain itu, komponen misformasi di mana siswa membuat kesalahan terbanyak adalah bentuk alternatif. Oleh karena itu, hal ini menunjukkan bahwa kemampuan bahasa Inggris siswa, terutama dalam tata bahasa, masih rendah. Penelitian lebih lanjut disarankan untuk menyelidiki lebih lanjut penyebab kesalahan yang terjadi dalam terjemahan siswa melalui wawancara atau kuesioner untuk memperoleh data yang lebih mendalam.

Kata kunci: *Analisis kesalahan, surface strategy taxonomy, tata bahasa, terjemahan*

INTRODUCTION

Translation is an important skill that allows students to transmit knowledge or culture and communicate effectively with individuals throughout the world. In order to translate a passage from the source to the target language, one needs to have adequate grammar knowledge; otherwise, the readers may misunderstand the information they receive if the translators are unable to translate it accurately (Fadhillah et al., 2020). As stated by Brown (2001) that grammar is the language rules related to the organization or standard arrangement and relationship among words in a sentence. Thus, to successfully transfer the meaning in doing translation, students must be able to use the correct grammar.

However, students of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Indonesia have been facing difficulties in constructing grammatical sentences in translation. They also find it difficult to choose equivalent words for English (Jannah et al., 2021). As a result, the idea of the sentence was not well delivered. Moreover, many students face ambiguity in the word, phrase, and sentence. They tend to be careless and lack motivation (Hasibuan and Simatupang, 2018). This is resulting in many grammatical errors made by students in conveying the meaning from Indonesian into English. Concerning this, an error in grammar refers to the incorrect action of students to construct the language in which they do not realize the mistakes they made (Corder, 1981). Making errors is an unavoidable part of learning a language. In relation to this, to produce good writing, one of the needed components concerns grammatical accuracy (Hinkel, 2004; Kumala et al., 2018). Moreover, the grammatical rules between English and Indonesian are different. This leads students to misuse certain words of English.

Regarding the related previous studies, Rosanti (2019) revealed that students made errors in terms of surface strategy taxonomy when translating narrative text. Similar to this, Atmowardoyo and Weda (2016) found that the students frequently made errors in translating the verbs from Indonesian into English. Additionally, the students made 41.45% errors from the total errors which were affected by overgeneralization and ignorance of rule restriction. Narulita (2016) and Yusuf and Jumriana (2015), in their findings, showed that the students' errors are mostly in translating noun phrases, verb phrases, and prepositional phrases. Specifically, errors commonly occur in translating English sentences, such as missing the substitute words and omitting the constituents of sentences irrelevant to source sentences. Handayani et al. (2018) investigated that the most dominant error found in the students' translation was misformation, which was caused by the impact of interlingual and intralingual transfer. Prihandini (2023), in her research, revealed 308 grammatical errors in four categories: 'omission,' 'misformation,' 'addition,' and 'misordering errors' in the students' narrative texts. The most frequent errors were 'misformation errors,' with 131 instances, particularly 'misformation of alternating form errors.' The errors resulted from the students' interlingual and intralingual transfer. The students also faced cognitive challenges in writing narrative texts due to their limited knowledge of English grammar and vocabulary.

Further, Jannah et al. (2021) found that there are four types of errors made by the eleventh grade students, namely omission, addition, misformation in regularization and alternating form,

and misordering. Those mentioned errors were caused by carelessness and first language interference. Moreover, in narrative written production, students are required to use past forms (Knapp & Watkins, 2005). Since those previously mentioned studies have analyzed the students' grammatical errors in different texts and settings, this research thus intended to analyze the errors made by the ninth-grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Ambarawa in translating the narrative text entitled *Kancil dan Buaya* (The Mouse Deer and Crocodile) from Indonesian into English. The findings of this research were expected to support the previous research and help teachers develop students' grammatical understanding. Hence, the researcher formulated the following research question: What types of grammatical errors do the students produce when translating narrative text from Indonesian into English?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Errors in Grammatical Structures

According to a study by Ionin et al. (2008), grammatical errors made by second-language learners can be attributed to three sources of knowledge: L1 transfer, universal grammar, and the input learners receive. Further, they suggest that making errors, especially grammatical errors, is common in the process of second language acquisition. According to Fries (1945) and Lado (1957), errors made by foreign or second-language learners can be anticipated by examining the variances between their native language and the language they are learning. They further propose that if the features of the target language align closely with those of the learner's native language, the acquisition will likely be straightforward; conversely, if there are significant differences, learning might prove challenging, resulting in errors by second language learners. Grammatical errors can be classified into various types, such as errors in word choice, word order, and verb tenses, and they can be influenced by the language habit in the learners' mother tongue, which may be different from the target language. Error analysis is an essential part of understanding the process of second language acquisition, as it helps identify the specific types of errors made by learners, such as lexical, syntactic, and morphological errors.

Types of Error

According to James (2013), the types of errors in translation include omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. Omission errors occur when a translator fails to translate a part of the text, leading to incomplete meaning. Meanwhile, addition errors involve including information that is not present in the original text, leading to a change in the intended meaning. In contrast, misformation errors occur when the translator distorts the original text's meaning, leading to inaccurate or misleading information. He further stated that misordering errors involve the incorrect arrangement of words or phrases, leading to a disruption in the flow and coherence of the translated text.

In addition to these types of errors, translation errors can also include punctuation errors, typos, and subjective errors such as not following the style guide or not adapting the text to the local market. Spelling, grammar, and syntax errors are also common and can significantly impact the quality of the translation. Furthermore, word-for-word translations and translating into a

language in which the translator lacks expertise are identified as common translation errors that can be detrimental to the accuracy and effectiveness of the translated content.

Narrative Text

Based on Anderson and Anderson (1997), narrative text is a form of writing that tells a story and aims to entertain or inform the reader or listener. As Anderson and Anderson proposed, the generic structure of a narrative text includes the orientation, complication, sequence of events/climax, resolution, and re-orientation. This structure aims to engage the audience by presenting a coherent and engaging story with detailed descriptions and clear event sequencing. Further, it is stated that narrative text is characterized by using specific language features, such as nouns to identify characters and places, adjectives for descriptions, and verbs to depict actions. The narrative text is a powerful means of communication used to describe interesting events and amuse and entertain the audience, making it an essential genre in writing instruction.

Translation

Translation is a complex process that involves transferring meaning from one language to another (Reynolds, 2011). Translation theorists often emphasize the differences between translations and their sources, but they cannot help but acknowledge that something is identical between them. Translation is not only about transferring words from one language to another but also about conveying the meaning of the text interpretation (Venuti, 1995). It is further described that translation is a process of reproducing the meaning of the text, not replicating the form of the text. This involves the reproduction of the meaning of the text, and it is not limited to the transfer of words from one language to another. Translation is a powerful tool for communication that conveys meaning across cultures and languages. In order to be able to translate a text, a comprehensive grasp of both the source and target languages, alongside a thorough appreciation of the cultural backdrop within which the text is situated, is essential.

RESEARCH METHOD

The purpose of this research was to analyze the types of students' grammatical errors in the narrative text translation. A descriptive qualitative method was employed in this research. The populations of this research are the ninth-grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Ambarawa in the academic year 2022/2023. There are 6 classes, each consisting of 27-32 students, for a total of 178 students. This research selected 10 students from the IX A class as the representative for the subject. Random sampling was chosen to determine the sample.

The instrument was translation task of narrative text entitled *Kancil dan Buaya* (The Mouse Deer and Crocodile). The text was in Indonesian as the source language to be translated by students into English as the target language. The aim was to see the result of students' translation concerning the text. The text consists of 4 paragraphs, including 26 sentences with 244 words. In collecting the data, the researcher administered the translation test in one offline meeting by giving the students a translation task. The given time was 90 minutes.

To analyze the data, this research used the Surface Strategy Taxonomy proposed by Dulay et al. (1982) in which the elements are omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. Further, the researcher conducted the following steps: (1) Collect the result of students' translation; (2) Identify the errors; (3) Classify the errors; (4) Calculate the errors; (5) Tabulate the errors; and (6) Explain the errors. Additionally, the researcher calculated the total of students' errors to find out the frequency in the form of percentages. Each sample of errors found was then presented in the table and described qualitatively.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the result and discussion regarding the errors found in students' narrative translations.

Results

This research was well-conducted. The students successfully did the translation test without any interruption. The students' translations were then identified to determine the types of errors. Simple calculation was also used to determine the frequency of each type of error. Furthermore, the result of the students' grammatical errors in narrative translation is presented below:

Table 1. The frequencies of students' grammatical errors

No.	Surface Strategy Taxonomy	Sub-category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Omission		**74**	**23.8%**
2.	Addition	Double marking	13	4.2%
		Regularization	67	21.5%
		Simple addition	16	5.1%
			96	**30.9%**
3.	Misformation	Regularization	16	5.1%
		Archi-form	39	12.5%
		Alternating form	54	17.4%
			109	**35%**
4.	Misordering		**32**	**10.3%**
	Total		**311**	**100%**

The table above shows the types and frequencies of grammatical errors made by students in their narrative text translation. The errors are classified according to the surface strategy taxonomy, including omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. Omission errors occur when a required element is left out, such as an article or a preposition. Addition errors occur when an unnecessary element is added, such as a double marking of tense or number, a regularization of an irregular form, or a simple addition of a word or a morpheme. Misformation errors occur when an incorrect form is used instead of the correct one, such as regularizing an irregular form, an archi-form that overgeneralizes a rule, or an alternating form that switches between two forms. Misordering errors occur when the order of elements is incorrect, such as the position of adverbs or modifiers. As presented in Table 1, the errors made by students in the narrative translation are mostly found in misformation, followed by addition and omission. In contrast, the least error that the students made during translating the text was misordering. Additionally, the most frequent errors in misformation are related to alternating form.

Discussion

This section presents a further elaboration of the research findings, including the grammatical errors that are specified in the four types of Surface Strategy Taxonomy, the examples, and the previous studies. Further, the following are the elaborations regarding the result of this research.

Omission

Based on the result shown in Table 1, the third most common error the students committed was related to omission. Dulay et al. (1982) argue that omission is the excluded item that leads to an unstructured sentence. The details can be seen in the following table:

Table 2. Omission errors

Aspects	The text in Source Language	Students' translation	The text in Target Language
Articles	*Keesokan harinya, kancil ingin menyeberang sungai.*	Next day, mouse deer want to cross river.	In the next day, <u>the</u> mouse deer wanted to cross <u>the</u> river.
Content words	*Aku ingin tahu apakah airnya hangat.*	I wanted to knowed if the water warm.	I wonder if the water <u>is</u> warm.

Verb inflections (-s, -ed, -ing)	*Kancil tersenyum.*	Mouse deer <u>smile.</u>	The mouse deer <u>smiled.</u>
Plural Markers	*Ia ingin mengajak seluruh buaya di sungai ini ke pesta.*	He wanted to invited all <u>crocodile</u> in this river to party.	He wants to invite all the <u>crocodiles</u> in this river to a party.
Possessive inflection markers (-'s, -s')	*Kancil lalu melompat ke punggung buaya.*	Mouse deer jumping to <u>crocodile back.</u>	The mouse deer then jumped onto <u>Crocodile's back.</u>

The table above shows that the students made errors in terms of omission, particularly in the aspects of articles, content words, verb inflections, plural markers, and possessive inflection markers. Generally, some of the students' translations are understandable in terms of meaning; however, they are grammatically incorrect. The students frequently omitted the article '*the*' and certain main verbs. This might be influenced by their mother tongue interference since there are no articles in Indonesian, and the use of certain verbs is different from English. Monny and Pratiwi (2022) in their findings showed that omission has the biggest total error which was influenced by the lack of vocabulary. Moreover, the students also tend to use word-for-word translation. It can be seen from the student's translation in using a possessive inflection marker by omitting ' *'s*' in the phrase '*crocodile's back*'.

Addition

From the tabulated result in Table 1, the second largest percentage of students' errors is in terms of addition. Addition refers to the presence of an item that must not exist in order to form a grammatically correct sentence (Dulay et al., 1982). The translation can be seen in the table below:

Table 3. Addition errors

Types of addition error	The text in Source Language	Students' translation	The text in Target Language
Double marking	*Kancil tidak mau dimakan oleh buaya ketika ia*	Mouse deer <u>did not wanted</u> to	Mouse Deer <u>did not want</u> to be eaten by Crocodile

	melintasi sungai.	eated from crocodile.	when he crosses the river.
Regularization	*Ia tahu bahwa buaya mungkin menunggu di dalam air untuk memakannya*	He <u>knowed</u> that crocodile maybe waited under the water to <u>eated</u> him.	He <u>knew</u> that the crocodile might be waiting underwater to <u>eat</u> him.
Simple addition	*Ia ingin makan buah-buahan di seberang sungai.*	He wanted to <u>eats</u> fruits across river.	He wanted to <u>eat</u> the fruits on the other side of the river.

As previously shown in Table 1, the errors found mostly deal with regularization. Regularization concerns with the errors caused by misconceptions in the rules of word forming by adding an item of regular verb to form an irregular verb. This is noticeable since the verbs that are mostly used in writing a narrative text are the past forms of verbs. In line with this, the students need to have adequate knowledge of the verbs in order to avoid making errors in regularization. Atmowardoyo and Weda (2016) in their findings revealed that frequent errors are caused by the overgeneralization in forming the past form of verbs. This can be seen in the examples above that the students tend to generalize the irregular form by adding the suffix '-*ed*' as in the regular form. However, some students also added certain morphemes like '-*s*' in the word '*eats'*, which makes the structure of the sentence incorrect.

Misformation

Based on the findings in Table 1, misformation gains the largest percentage in students' grammatical errors. Misformation refers to the use of the incorrect form of structure (Dulay et al., 1982). Additionally, alternating form has the biggest percentage in terms of misformation. This refers to the error in which the students have a limited understanding of how to choose the correct word for various classes and forms of tenses. The details are further described as follows:

Table 4. Misformation errors

Types of misformation error	The text in Source Language	Students' translation	The text in Target Language
Regularization	*Mereka berbaris di*	They <u>are</u> <u>form</u> a line	They lined up across the river.

	sepanjang sungai.	along the river.	
Archi-forms	*Tentu saja kancil tidak memasukkan kakinya.*	Of course mouse deer did not put <u>it</u> leg.	Of course the mouse deer did not put in <u>his</u> leg.
Alternating forms	*Ia punya ide dan berseru keras, "Buaya!"*	He <u>have</u> idea and scream, "Crocodile!"	He <u>had</u> an idea and called out loud, "Crocodile!"

From the examples provided in the table above, it can be seen that the students had difficulty in forming English sentences. Moreover, they seemed to be confused when distinguishing word usage in certain word classes. To illustrate, the student used '*it*' instead of '*its'* or '*his'*, which means and functions differently. Another student also chose the verb '*have*' as an alternate of '*had*', both of which have the same meaning but different uses in terms of tenses.

Misordering

As stated by Dulay et al. (1982), Misordering refers to a morpheme that is placed incorrectly in a sentence. This research found that misordering is the least frequent type of error that occurred in the students' narrative translation. It can be seen from the result in Table 1 that the obtained percentage is 10.3%. Furthermore, the translation can be seen in the following table:

Table 5. Misordering errors

The text in Source Language	Students' translation	The text in Target Language
Haha, buaya bodoh!	Haha, crocodile stupid!	Haha, stupid crocodile!

In the example presented in Table 5, the error made by the student is the incorrect placement of word order between *'crocodile'* and *'stupid.'* The student seemed to refer to the arrangement of words in Indonesian, where the adjective precedes the noun. Meanwhile, in English, the adjective '*stupid*' is functioned to modify the noun '*crocodile*', which becomes the noun phrase. As stated in the results that the errors found in students' translation mostly occurred in the component of misformation; thus, this research supports the related previous study conducted by Handayani et al. (2018), which analyzed and found the possible causes of error made

by students in translating narrative text. According to their findings, the type of error that has the biggest percentage is misformation. This research also supports the findings from Jannah et al. (2021), which show that the students' errors in the narrative text translation mostly occurred in misformation which has the highest percentage.

CONCLUSION

Concerning the results of this research, the students made various errors, including omitting some important items, adding unnecessary and inappropriate morphemes, and forming incorrect word orders. Since error refers to the action performed due to a lack of knowledge or skill, the students, therefore, need to practice more in translation, which can lead to better writing ability. In brief, it can be stated that most students still have limited knowledge and understanding related to English grammar. Furthermore, this research only aimed at finding out the students' grammatical errors; therefore, it is suggested that further research seek more into the causes of errors that occurred in students' translation through interviews or questionnaires in order to achieve more in-depth data.

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