AN ANALYSIS OF GRAMMATICAL ERRORS MADE BY THE TENTH GRADE STUDENTS OF SMAN 1 CLURING IN WRITING RECOUNT TEXTS

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Abstract

This study aimed to find out the types of grammatical errors made by the tenth grade students of SMA N 1 Cluring and classify the causes of the students' errors that influenced their errors in writing recount texts. Descriptive qualitative research was used in this study to explore the data which focused on students' grammatical errors in writing recount texts. The result of this study shows that there were 399 grammatical errors and consisting of 12 types of errors, namely *omission of article, omission of preposition, omission of marker, omission of conjunction, simple addition, regularization error, alternating form, misordering, word choice, spelling, punctuation,* and *capitalization* found in the students' recount texts. The type of grammatical error mostly made by the students was *alternating form* which was 309 (77.44%) in total number. The most frequent source of errors which mostly influenced the students' errors in their writings was *intralingual transfer* which had 325 (81.45%) of the total number of errors. However, the students still had problems in using grammatically correct sentences in paragraph, especially in writing recount texts. Furthermore, knowing the students' grammatical errors in writing recount texts can be used as a basis for conducting remedial teaching.

Keywords: Error Analysis; Grammatical Error; Recount Text.

1. Introduction

English is a foreign language in Indonesia. In the context of English as a foreign language (EFL), the students' errors are always exist in second language and it is the sign of human fallibility (Fauziati, 2011). The difficulty of Indonesian students does not only refer to the meaning of the language but also to the way how they should apply the language. The important components of English should be learned by the students in order to support. In applying English. According to Harmer (2007), there are four integrated English skills namely, listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In this case, listening and reading are receptive skills while speaking and writing are productive skills. As a productive skill, writing skill does not only include to the vocabulary like receptive skills but it also includes the correct grammar and the writing rules in composing a paragraph. According to Harmer (2004), writing is totally different from speaking. In writing, students should think many times about the idea as opposed to what they do in oral activities. Writing is one of difficult skill for EFL students because their lack of knowledge about grammar, vocabulary, and spelling (Saragih et al., 2014). It is important for students to master the writing skill in order to make the paragraph comprehensible.

Mastering writing skill is the most difficult thing for students who consider English as a foreign language (Richard and Renandya, 2002). Students have to think many things in writing process such as word choice, punctuation and so on. Besides, the most important thing to support in making a good paragraph is grammar. According to Cowan (2008), grammar is the set of rules that describes how words can be arranged to form correct sentences in a certain language. It means that grammar is the aspect of language that explains how the language is structured. According to Dewanti and Putri (2014), in delivering the sentence or uttering the sentence well, students should produce it correctly in terms of grammar. It makes the sentence or paragraph easy to understand.

The importance of grammar is not only for oral language but also for written language. Students are still making an error in their writing. Commonly EFL students are still lack of grammatical concept that causes some errors in writing (Uthman & Abdalla, 2015). Students are still confused in organizing the sentence of English as a foreign language since there are some differences of language rules between the students' first language and their target language. According to Hubbard et al. (1983), error happens because of the lack of knowledge

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about the target language (English). It is because EFL students do not know well about the grammatical rules of the language. It is natural for EFL students to make errors in order to achieve certain language competence (Krashen, 1982). Making error is considered as an important learning process to develop their competence in mastering the target language. It is necessary in understanding the students' sources of errors to assist the students' success in acquiring writing skill (Rattanadilok, 2015)

It is not only the complexity of the target language that is learned by EFL students, but also the differences of language rules between the students' first language and their target language that are considered as the problems that are dealt by the students. This situation leads students to make grammatical errors in writing process. It is possible for students to make an error or mistake in their writing process, especially for EFL students. Both errors and mistakes are different problems (Mourtaga, 2004). Actually, a mistake is not the result of students' competence and it can be self-corrected. While, a grammatical error refers to the wrongness of grammar. It is caused by a lack of students' knowledge about grammatical rules of the target language. In this case, grammatical error is one of main problem for students in learning the target language, especially in writing process.

In the process of learning writing skill there are three genres of monologue text which are learnt by students and that are obliged by the curriculum, namely descriptive text, narrative text, and recount text. One of the texts which are learnt by EFL students is recount text. Recount text is a text that retells past events which happened in chronological order (Andersen & Andersen, 1997). It has the purpose of telling someone's experience in the past. In recount text students can explore the unforgettable experience and write their experience into text through sequence of events.

There are some writing rules that should be used in making recount text. These include common generic features of recount text, namely orientation, record of event, and re-orientation (Ken Hyland, 2004). The orientation part of recount text provides the information about whom, where, and when. While, record of event is about the sequence of events happened in the past. Re-orientation is as the closure of events in recount text. In this case, students need to think creatively to make a well-organized paragraph. Besides, students should be aware of the language features of recount text that will be used. Since the recount text tells about the past events, it means that the text must use past tense. In this case, students should be aware of the writing rules in making recount text.

Students have to master recount text in order to make a well-structured recount text. Since there are some different rules in foreign language, students still made some errors in writing recount texts. However, the rules of grammar that are used in writing recount text cause the students to find some problems. Therefore, it is difficult to make paragraph comprehensible. In fact, junior high school students have already been taught about recount text but there are some errors made by students. It is not only in structuring paragraph but also in using grammatical rules such as tenses, language features and so on.

Many researchers conducted study about error analysis in writing recount texts, such as Iim Imlakiyah (2016) conducted a study about students' grammatical error made by the students. The result showed that the common errors made by students was *misformation*. In addition, the result of this study also showed the information about the ability of the students in writing process, especially in writing recount text. Hence, Fitriah et al. (2019) investigated the errors and causes of of errors made by the students in writing recount texts. Their study concluded that the errors occurred because of the students' lack of knowledge about the rules of the target language. Even though there are many researchers who analyzed about grammatical error in writing recount texts, it should be noted that there are many students who make an error in their writing process.

Since there were some problem faced by the students in writing process, especially in recount text. This study focuses in analyzing the tenth-grade students' grammatical errors in writing recount texts.

2. Method

This research uses content analysis design. The design used in this research is descriptive design by using qualitative approach. In this research, descriptive design is used as a way of describing the result of the qualitative data. In this case, qualitative approach is used for exploring the data which focus on students' grammatical errors in writing recount texts. Qualitative research aims to understand something more specifically. It is not only exploring the cause and effect of something, but also exploring something that is being studied (Moleong, 2013).

The subjects of this study were the students of the tenth-grade students of MIPA-5 at SMA N 1 Cluring. The study took one class as the subject of this study, in which there were 34 students in one class consisting of 11 male students and 23 female students. It should be noted that the subjects or the students had studied about recount text before.

The data of this research were collected by conducting writing test and interview through online class. The data were collected after gave the information and the examples of recount texts. The students' recount texts were identified and classified the errors based on types of errors obtain from Dulay (1982) and Betty's (1989) types of errors, namely; Omission of *To be,* Omission of *Article,* Omission of *Preposition,* Omission of *Marker,* Omission of *Conjunction,* Double Marking, Regularization, Simple Addition, Regularization Error, Archi Form, Alternating Form, Misordering, Word Form, Word Choice, Incomplete Sentence, Spelling, Punctuation, Capitalization, and Meaning not Clear.

For analyzing the data, the formula introduced by Bluman (2004) was used. The formula is as follows.

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \text{ X } 100\%$$

P = Percentage
F = Frequency of false answer
N = Total number of error

In this case, the result was calculated by using the formula and numerical result in percentage term. Then, the percentage result was interpreted descriptively.

3. Findings and Discussion

From the analysis, 399 grammatical errors were found in the students' recount texts. There were twelve types of errors found in the students' writings. The classification of errors are presented below.

Table 1. Frequency and percentage of grammatical errors

Error types	Frequency of errors	Percentage
Alternating form	309	77.44%
Punctuation	33	8.27%
Capitalization	15	3.75%
Word choice	7	1.75%
Omission of preposition	6	1.50%
Omission of article	5	1.25%
Simple addition	5	1.25%
Misordering	5	1.25%
Omission of marker	4	1.00%
Spelling	4	1.00%
Omission of conjunction	3	0.75%
Regularization error	2	0.50%
Total	399	100%

From 34 students' recount texts, there were 399 errors found in the students' recount texts. The errors are classified into nineteen types of error adapted from Dulay et al., (1982) and Betty S. Azzar (1989). From nineteen types of errors, there were twelve types of errors found in the students' writings. The most frequent type of error found in the students' recount texts was *alternating form* which had 77.44% of the total of errors. The next type of error was *punctuation* which had 8.27%. *Capitalization* type of error was 3.75% and *word choice* type of error was 1.75%. Then, it was followed by *omission of preposition* which had 1.50% of the total errors. *Omission of article, simple addition,* and *misordering* types of error have the same of the total errors (1.25%). *Omission of marker* had the same the total of errors as *spelling* error (1.00%). *Omission of conjunction* was 0.75%. *Regularization errors* was as the lowest errors made by the students in writing recount texts which was 0.50%. The following is an example of each types of error.

a. **Alternating form**

[**X**]: About last April, I only [do] my activities at home.

[✓]: About last April, I only **did** my activities at home.

According to Dulay et al., (1982), *alternating form* is incorrectness of verb tense that is used by the students in their writings. In this case, the word *"do"* is not appropriately used in the sentence because there is the phrase *"About last April, …."* which indicates that the activity happened in the past. The appropriate word that should be used is *"did"* to indicate past activity.

b. **Punctuation**

[**X**]: At that time I was doing my final exam of junior high school.

[✓]: At that time**,** I was doing my final exam of junior high school.

Punctuation error happens when the students omit a punctuation mark that should appear in the sentence (Betty, 1989). In the sentence above, a *'comma'* should appear to separate between subclause with main clause. In this case, subclause in the sentence is *"At that time"*.

c. **Capitalization**

[**X**]: I like to spend my time with another activities such as watched [korean] drama or read some novels.

[✓]: I like to spend my time with another activities such as watched **Korean** drama or read some novels.

Capitalization is one of the error types of Betty S. Azzar (1989). *Capitalization* error happens when the students are not use capital letter which is primarily needed for the first letter of a sentence or proper names. In the sentence above, capital letter should be used in the first letter of "korean", in which it refers to the name of country.

d. **Word choice**

[**X**]: I was bored of my days, it had the same activities from getting up [going to] sleeping again.

[✓]: I was bored of my days, it had the same activities from getting up **until to** sleeping again.

Word choice refers to the inaccuracy in choosing a word that is used in the sentence (Betty, 1989). In this case, the preposition *"going to"* in the sentence b is inappropriately used in the sentence and it should be changed into *"until to"*.

e. **Omission of preposition**

[**X**]: I did it myself without other people's help.

[✓]: I did it **by** myself without other people's help.

According to Dulay et al., (1982), *omission of preposition* is an error in omitting a preposition required in a sentence. In this case, the student omitted the preposition *"by"* before the word *'myself'*.

f. **Omission of article**

[**X**]: My aunt has cake shop that is quite busy every day.

[✓]: My aunt has **a** cake shop that is quite busy every day.

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Omission of article happens when the students omit an article in their sentences (Dulay et al., 1982). There are three kinds of articles in English, namely; *the, a,* and *an.* In the sentence above, the students omitted the article *"a"* before the word *'cake'*.

g. Simple addition

[**X**]: Sometimes I was stressed and dizzy with **{the}** many assignments given to me.

[✓]: Sometimes I was stressed and dizzy with many assignments given to me.

Simple Addition is a part of addition errors in Dulay's (1982) types of errors. It has the same definition as *omit a word* in Betty's (1989) types of errors. *Simple addition* occurs when the students use unnecessary word in their sentences. In the sentence above, there is the article *"the"* before the phrase *"many assignments"*. In this case, the article *"the"* is not required in the sentence.

h. Misordering

[**X**]: The government also provided free internet data to all [students Indonesia], but that was not enough to help with other problems.

[✓]: The government also provided free internet data to all **Indonesian students**, but that was not enough to help with other problems.

According to Dulay et al., (1982), *misordering* refers to the incorrectness of word placement in a sentence. The phrase *"students Indonesia"* should be changed into *"Indonesian students"*. In this case, it commonly happens because the students still use their first language structure in writing a sentence.

i. Omission of marker

[**X**]: During the holidays I still did some [work] from online school

[✓]: During the holidays I still did some **works** from online school

Omission of marker happens when the students omit a marker which is needed in their writings. The marker s/-es is needed in conveying plural nouns (Dulay et al., 1982). In the sentence above, the word *"work"* should use the marker -s because there is the word "some" which should be followed with plural noun.

j. Spelling

[**X**]: The Covid19 virus had spread to several areas and it made all of school activities were [stoped].

[✓]: The Covid19 virus had spread to several areas and it made all of school activities were **stopped**.

Spelling is one type of errors introduced by Betty S. Azzar (1989). *Spelling* error refers to the inaccuracy spelling of word made by the students in their writings. The word *"stoped"* in the sentence above should be *"stopped"*.

k. Omission of Conjunction

[**X**]: Because Corona virus, all learning activities were done through online.

[✓]: Because **of** Corona virus, all learning activities were done through online.

Omission of conjunction is one of error types by Dulay et al., (1982). *Omission of conjunction* happens when the students omit a conjunction which should appear in the sentences. It can be seen that the student omit a conjunction *'of'* which should appear in a well formed sentence.

l. Regularization error

[**X**]: It [maked] me dizzy because learning online was not like usual and I did not really understand the material.

[✓]: It **made** me dizzy because learning online was not like usual and I did not really understand the material.

Regularization error is a part of *misformation* error introduced by Dulay et al., (1982). *Regularization error* happens when the students use the same treatment between irregular verb and regular verb. The word *"maked"* in the sentence above should be changed into *"made"*. In this case, the word *"made"* is irregular verb which indicates past form.

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Based on the findings of this study, the type of grammatical error mostly made by the students was *alternating form* of *misformation* which was 309 (77.44%) in total number. This finding was also supported by the reviewed study which was conducted by Iim Imakliyah (2017), in which it was found that the highest number of errors was *misformation* error which was 109 (60%) in total number.

In the relation to the sources of errors made by the students, Richard's theory was used in classifying the causes of errors. Richard (1974) introduces three causes of errors commonly influence the students' errors in their writings, namely; *interlingual transfer, intralingual transfer* and *developmental error.*

Table 2. Causes of Errors' Frequency and Percentage

Causes of errors	Frequency of errors	Percentage
Interlingual transfer	26	6.52%
Intralingual transfer	325	81.45%
Developmental error	48	12.03%
Total	399	100%

The highest number of causes of errors was intralingual transfer which had 325 errors or 81.45%. According to Richard (1974), *intralingual transfer* refers to the students' lack of knowledge about a target language, especially in producing a target language sentences. There were 48 errors caused by *developmental errors. Developmental error* is caused by the error in learning process of the students' first language, in which it can influences in their target language (Richard, 1974). *Interlingual transfer* had the lowest number of causes of errors in this study. The total number of *interlingual transfer* errors were 26 errors or 6.51%. According Richard (1974), *interlingual transfer* happens when the students use their first language rule in translating a target language.

The findings of this study showed that *intralingual transfer* was the most frequently source of errors which mostly influence the students' errors in their writings which had 325 (81.45%) of the total number of errors. It was supported by the reviewed study by Fridayanti (2017) which found *intralingual transfer* as the highest number of cause of errors in the students' recount texts (90.96%).

4. Conclusion and Suggestions

Based on the result of the data analysis, this study found that the result of this study found 399 grammatical errors made by the tenth grade students at SMA N 1 Cluring. The twelve types of errors were found in the students' recount texts. The types of error which was mostly committed by the students in their recount texts was *alternating form* with the total number of occurrence 309 (77.44%) out of the total number of error. The lowest frequency of occurrence was *regularization error* which was 2 (0.50%) in number. The result of this study also shows that there were three causes of errors including *intralingual transfer, interlingual transfer,* and *developmental error. Intralingual transfer* was the highest source of errors found in the students recount texts which included 325 (81.45%) out of 399 of errors. There were 48 (12.03%) errors out of 399 of errors belonging to *developmental error.* The lowest was *interlingual transfer* which had 26 (6.51%) in total number.

In connection with the conclusion above, there are some suggestions related to the result of this study and related to different parties namely; educators and EFL learners. First, the errors made by learners should be noticed by educators. Educators are suggested to pay attention to the learners' grammatical errors which can be used as a basic for conducted remedial teaching. In addition, educators should give concern to the most often errors committed by the learners, so that educators can make it easier to assess their learners. Second, EFL learners are suggested to be aware of the way in writing recount texts. They are also suggested to learn more about the grammar of target language so that they are able to write grammatically correct paragraphs. EFL learners should also pay attention to the

grammatical errors that they have committed so that they are able to do self-correction with the grammatical errors having been done.

With reference to the findings, the result of this study can help to know how far the students understand about the grammatical rules in writing recount texts and it can be used as a basis for conducting remedial teaching. In addition, the result of the study can be used to analyze the appropriate strategy to anticipate the students' errors in writing recount texts.

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