

STUDENTS' ERRORS IN USING SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE IN WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT

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ABSTRACT

The students of SMA N 2 Tolitoli had problem when they writing English, especially in writing using simple present tense. This research aimed to identify the students' errors and to know the cause of students' errors in using simple present tense in writing descriptive text made by the eleventh grade students of SMA N 2 Tolitoli. This used a qualitative research design. The samples were 28 students at class XI which were selected purposively. The data was collected through test writing. Test writing was conducted to know types of errors that students make in writing descriptive text by using simple present tense. After those data were analyzed, it was found the result. The result of this research showed that the most students made errors in misformation with 62 errors on percentage 48.06%, as the highest percentage. It was found in students' writing test that become the greatest errors was in using personal verb, in using auxiliary be and then in using pronoun. Omission was in second rank with 39 errors on percentage 30.23%. Which most of students made errors in writing auxiliary be "am, is, are" and punctuation mark. The third was addition with 22 errors on percentage 17.06%. Which the most errors that always the students make was in conjunction and double mark (be). The last was Misordering with 6 errors on percentage 04.65%, which it was only in the phrase. The students always change the position of modifier and head of phrase. There for, based on the finding of the research, the student was still difficult in writing using simple present tense. It was proven from the students' error analysis and it answered the research questions of this research and got what become the aimed of this research.

Keywords : *Students' Error, Simple Present Tense, Writing Descriptive Text*

ABSTRAK

Siswa SMA N 2 Tolitoli mengalami kesulitan dalam menulis bahasa Inggris, terutama dalam menulis menggunakan simple present tense. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi kesalahan siswa dan untuk mengetahui penyebab kesalahan siswa dalam menggunakan simple present tense dalam menulis teks deskriptif yang dibuat oleh siswa kelas sebelas SMA N 2 Tolitoli. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain penelitian kualitatif. Sampel penelitian adalah 28 siswa kelas XI yang dipilih secara purposive. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui tes menulis. Tes menulis dilakukan untuk mengetahui jenis kesalahan yang dilakukan siswa dalam menulis teks deskriptif dengan menggunakan simple present tense. Setelah data tersebut dianalisis, ditemukan hasilnya. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa siswa paling banyak melakukan kesalahan dalam misformation dengan 62 kesalahan pada persentase 48,06%, sebagai persentase tertinggi ditemukan pada tes menulis siswa yang menjadi kesalahan terbesar adalah dalam menggunakan kata kerja pribadi, dalam menggunakan bantu menjadi dan kemudian dalam menggunakan kata ganti. Omission berada di peringkat kedua dengan 39 kesalahan dengan persentase 30,23%. Dimana sebagian besar siswa membuat kesalahan dalam penulisan bantu menjadi "am, is, are" dan tanda baca. Ketiga adalah penambahan dengan 22 kesalahan dengan persentase 17,06%. Kesalahan mana yang paling sering dilakukan siswa adalah pada kata sambung dan tanda ganda (be). Terakhir adalah Misordering dengan 6 kesalahan dengan persentase 04,65% yang hanya terdapat pada frase. Siswa selalu mengubah posisi modifier dan head of phrase. Oleh karena itu, berdasarkan hasil penelitian, siswa masih kesulitan dalam menulis menggunakan simple present tense. Terbukti dari analisis kesalahan siswa dan menjawab pertanyaan penelitian penelitian ini dan mendapatkan apa yang menjadi tujuan penelitian ini.

Keywords : *Students' Error, Simple Present Tense, Writing Descriptive Text*

Introduction

Tenses are a grammatical in English that emphasis in using verb form is related on using time. It means that when using verb toward what we are talking about, we have to consider the time at the moment. In English, there are three parts of time that must be known, those are past, present, and future. From these parts of time that most often used is present tense.

Present tense is tense form that be used to explain something that happen in the present time. There are four types of simple present and it has different function. Those are simple present tense, present continue, present perfect, present perfect continue. Simple present tense is a tense that be used to say something that related with habit, fact, and general truth. Generally, we use simple present in writing descriptive text, which descriptive text is a writing form that aim to explain or describe something, such as people, thing, animals, and etc.

Education process that be conducted in school in nowadays is curriculum 2013. Curriculum 2013 has function as instrument to make students become human being that have quality, which can active in answering challenge of the times. There are 4 types of text that be learned suitable with mandate curriculum 2013 such as narrative, descriptive, recount, and interactional text.

In learning descriptive text, students are expected can understand, and can describe something fluently in using simple present tense. But the fact it is not suitable with expectation, the students is still less knowledge about that. Usually the errors that always happen are following. There is an item that must appear on sentence, but some students miss it. Example: "He read book" it should be "He reads book". In this case, in using subject can influent using verb. And also there is an item put in the sentence but actually it does not need in a sentence. Example: "Tony can be speak English fluently" it should be "Tony can speak English fluently".

Based on the statement above the researcher would like to take up a research under the title is *Students' Error in Using Simple Present Tense in Writing Descriptive Text*. In order to the researcher can identify the students' error and what is the cause of error. It is very important to do this research because except for identify the error, this research can be an evaluation and material of learning in order to the students can avoid the same error. I hope from this research, students can avoid their error in using simple present tense on the other situation. And it can be reference study to improve student grammar, especially in simple present tense.

Theoretical review

In learning English, especially in writing skill is very difficult to be spared from the error. Everyone cannot master a language, in this case English language without committing error first. Error is happened because the students or someone make a fault which they do not know the correct item. (Brown, 2007) stated that error as noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker, reflecting the inter-language competence of learner. Error is wrong response because the students do not have knowledge about what is right answer is. So, according the theory above the error in this study is the wrong written product that the students do not understand yet the item, whether right or wrong, and they are not able to correct it by themselves.

Nowadays error and mistake often is mentioned same by the people, but actually it is different. Jack C. Richards and Richard Schmidt (2010) mentioned that a distinction is sometimes made between an error, which results from incomplete knowledge, and a mistake made by a learner when writing or speaking and which is caused by lack of attention, fatigue, carelessness, or some other aspect of performance. Brown (2007) stated that error as noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker, reflecting the inter-language competence of learner. Error is wrong

response because the students do not have knowledge about what is right answer is, while mistake is wrong response that if the students thought about it they would realize what the right answer is.

From the statement above we can differentiate between mistake and error. The different happen because the knowledge. It means that error happen because the people do not have knowledge to correct the foul. Meanwhile mistake happen because the people actually have knowledge about the item correct but they make something foul. Thus, from the reasons we cannot make same the items. Brevity mistakes can be self corrected with or without being pointed out to the learners but errors cannot be self-corrected.

Talking about error, it relates to what is called error analysis. Carl James (2013) mentioned that Error Analysis is the process of determining the incidence, nature, causes and consequences of unsuccessful language. Learning foreign language is like English. It has something different with learning first language or mother tongue. Learning mother tongue or first language is not affected by other language but it is distinctive for students who Learn English. The process of learning is affected 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 an individual made in the process of constructing a new system of language needs to be analysed carefully. This analysis becomes the key to the understanding of the process of foreign language acquisition. This analysis is well-known as error analysis

Brown (2007: 259) mention 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. The fact that learners do make errors, and that those errors can be observed, analysed, and classified to reveal something of system operating within the learner, led to a surge of study of learners' errors, called error analysis. Error analysis becomes distinguished from contractive analysis by its examination of errors attributable to all possible sources, not just those resulting from negative transfer of the native language. Error analysis easily superseded contractive analysis, as we discovered that only some of the errors a learner make are attributable in mother tongue that learners do not actually make all the errors that contractive analysis predicted they should, and that learners from disparate language background tend to make similar errors in one target language.

Errors analysis can keep us to closely focused on specific languages rather than viewing universal aspect of language, (Brown, 2007: 259). Researchers pay more attention to linguistic elements that are common to all languages. The language system of learners may have elements that reflect neither the target language or native language, but rather a universal feature of some kinds. But, there are problem, of course, with the search for universal properties of learners errors. It is not at all clear in any precise way when the influence of the universal will appear in interlanguage of learners rather than a violation of it based of influence from the source of target language. According to definition above, it can be conclude that error analysis is the process in language for analysing, interpreting, and classifying learner's error to give us indication learning process especially in simple present tense.

To categorize error into classification based on the types or the causes of errors is not easy work. Many times error cannot be traced back into one cause. Moreover, the boundaries between different causes of many errors are sometimes unclear that the arbitrary classification decision

unavoidable. Dulay(1982) 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. There are 4 types of error. Those are omission, addition, miss-formation, misordering.

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”

Although any morpheme or word in a sentence is a potential candidate for omission, some types of morphemes are omitted more than other. Content morphemes carry the bulk of referential meaning of a sentence: noun, verbs, adjectives, adverbs. For example, “*Mary is the president of the new company*”. The words, *Mary*, *president*, *new* and *company* are the content morphemes that carry the burden of meaning. If one heard *Mary president new company*, one could deduce a meaning sentence, while if one heard “*Is the of the*”. One could not even begin to guess what the speaker might have had in mind.

Is, *the*, and *of* are grammatical morphemes, those little words that play a minor role in conveying the meaning of a sentence. They include noun and verb inflections (the-s in birds, the -s in mother’s, the -ed in looked, the -ing in laughing, etc.); articles (a, the, an, etc); verb auxiliaries (is, will, can, etc); (it, was, am, etc); and preposition (in, on, under, etc). When any item should be put in a sentence but it is nothing, so it is called omission.

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 know my name”. It should be “he doesn’t know my name.” there are three types of addition errors have been observed in the speech of both L₁ and L₂ learners. Those are: double marking, regularization, and simple addition. Double marking is one of addition errors that have two items rather than one remarked for the same features in the sentence. Example: “He doesn’t eats” it should be He doesn’t eat. Regularization errors that fall under the addition category are those in which a marker that is typically added to a linguistic item is erroneously added to exceptional items of the given class that do not take a marker. For example, sheep and putted are both regularization in which the regular plural and past tense markers “-s” and “-ed”, respectively, have been added to items which do not take markers. Others such errors observed in learner performance include deers, hitted and beaten. Simple addition is type of addition error which it does not include in both of double marking or regularization. Example: a this.

c. Miss-formation

It is characterized by the utilizing of the wrong form of the morpheme or structure. In formation errors, the learner supplies something although it is not correct. Examples: “this cats” it should be “these cats”. There are three types of this error: Regularization errors, Achi-forms, Alternating forms.

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)

Grammar is the system of a language. People sometimes describe grammar as the "rules" of a language, but in fact no language has rules. If we use the word "rules", we suggest that somebody created the rules first and then spoke the language, like a new game. But languages did not start like that. Languages started by people making sounds which evolved into words, phrases and sentences. No commonly-spoken language is fixed. All languages change over time. What we call "grammar" is simply a reflection of a language at a particular time.

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 study a language, one must know the structure of that language, Siti Nurjanah (2017: 13). 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, Nunan (2005:2). 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.

In learning foreign language, especially in learning grammar, Tenses is element of grammar be most complicated to be learned by students. In Siti Nurjanah (2017: 14) mentioned that in the area of English as foreign language learning, especially the learning on grammar, tense has probably been a quite complicated and demanding element to learn. In English, when we have to deal with tense, we must automatically work with verb form changes. In Indonesian language we do not utilize verb form changes in tense. So it makes tenses difficult for being understood by students.

Simple Present Tense

The present tense is a grammatical tense whose principal function is to locate a situation or event in present time. The term "present tense" is usually used in descriptions of specific languages to refer to a particular grammatical form or set of forms. These may have a variety of uses, not all of which will necessarily refer to present time. For example, in the English sentence he reads newspaper every morning. The verb form reads is said to be in the present tense, even though in this particular context it refers to an event in future time. Similarly, in the historical present, the present tense is used to narrate events that occurred in the past, Laela Hayati Rohmah (2016).

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. This tense is used to talk about things in general. We are not only thinking about now, but it is used to say something is true in general.

In general, the simple present expresses events or situations that exist always, usually, habitually; they exist now, have existed in the past, and probably will exist in the future, Having a good knowledge of grammar, especially the use of simple present tense will help the students to write the sentence in the correct way and to make the readers clearer to understand the sentence. One of the text types which use present tense is descriptive text because the writer describes something

still live and this tense also one of the language characteristics in writing descriptive text (Noprianto, 2017).

The form of simple present tense as following:

- 1) Affirmative (+) S + V1 + (O) example: i read book story every day.
- 2) Negative (-) S + Do/Does Not + V1 + (O) Example: she doesn't live in Indonesia
- 3) Interrogative (?) Do/Does +S +V1 Example: Does he bring your book?

Writing

Writing is 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 (Nunan; 2005:98).

Based on explanation above, it can be conclude that writing is a process of arranging idea by producing a sequence of sentence arranged in particular order and linked in certain ways to convey meaning. Writing has some language Component. There is vocabulary, grammatical rules/ sentence structure, punctuation, and spelling. All Component of Writing are explained below:

a. Vocabulary

Vocabulary is variations of words that have meaning. 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

Grammar is rule about how to make a correct sentence. In Nunan (2005:2) Richards, Platt, and Weber mentioned that 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.

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.

Descriptive Text

Descriptive text is the text that describes something to make the readers or listeners can feel as what the writer experienced with his or her six senses; looks, smells, feels, acts, tastes, and sounds (Husna et al., 2013). The descriptive text used to describe something in detail to make the reader could imagine or visualize the description of writing. The generic structure of a descriptive

text is different from the other texts such as, report, narrative, recount, procedure, and argumentation. The descriptive text must have two major elements. They are identification and description (Husna et al., 2013). Identification is to identify the event or thing that would be described. Meanwhile, description is to describe the parts or characteristics of the object (Rosa et al., 2008).

Additionally, Sudarwati and Grace (2005) stated that there are two components of the generic structure of descriptive text. They are identification; identifies phenomenon to be described and description; describes parts, qualities, and. Thus, from the definition above, the identification usually occurs in the first paragraph and the description states in the continuing paragraph which will describe the characteristic of the object. The descriptive text also has significant grammatical features that support the form of it. There are several significant grammatical features of the descriptive text; focusing on the specific participant, using the simple present tense, the adjective and adverb that describing the object, numbering or classifying something (Emilia, 2008).

In describing the object, the author may utilize imaginative language, Interesting comparisons and images that appeal to the senses to make the reader easily form the object being described. However, we should be careful in choosing words and then placing them correctly. Basically most of the words in descriptive writing are determiners, adjectives, and adverbials. In short, determining words, sentences, structure, and organization is very important to make the audience aware of descriptive writing purpose.

Research Method

In this research was utilized descriptive qualitative research, because in this research, the researcher purposes to describe the students' error in using simple present tense in descriptive text. Qualitative research is a technique that always utilized by the researcher in analysing the data. According to Strauss and Cobin (2015) qualitative research is kinds of research which the results are not obtained through statistic procedure or another form of arithmetic. In this case, this study is purpose to expose what errors emerge most in the students' descriptive writing and it be conducted out learning process of the study. There are two ways that be conducted by the researcher to collect the data because at the time collect the date, it is in pandemic covid-19, so the government do not allow school be opened, Because the reason the researcher collect some student in the one home to collect the data, and also invite some student to collect the data in the school.

Findings

In this research, the researcher used test writing of analysing data. In collecting the data, the researcher gave the test writing to the eleventh grade students of SMA N 2 Tolitoli in the academic years of 2020/2021.

The purpose of the test writing was for knowing the students' errors in using simple present tense in writing descriptive text, the researcher analyzed the errors that made by the eleventh grade students of SMA N 2 Tolitoli. The researcher classified the types of errors into four parts: omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. In writing test, the students were asked for write down 10 sentences in their writing. If it was not limited, will be any injustice in analyzing the data. There for, to minimalist it happen, the researcher only analyse the students' writing if it has 9 and 10 sentences. There are 28 student can be took the data. From all of student written, there are 2 students that have 4 sentence, 1 student that have 5 sentences, 3 students that have 6 sentences, 3 students that have 7 sentences, 2 students that have 8 sentences, 4 students that have 9 sentences, 9 students that have 10 sentences, and 3 students that have more than 10 sentences. Thus, from the

explanation above, that can be seen only 14 students that can be analyzed their writing. There are 4 students that have 9 sentences and there are 9 students that have 10 sentences.

The researcher classified students' errors into four parts: Omission, Addition, Misformation, and Misordering. In the table analyzing, the researcher uses some sign to sign the errors that happen in the sentences. It is conducted in order to the researcher easy in classifying the data. The sign are following :

- a. Omission is a drops have underline (...) that sign the sentence belongs to omission error.
- b. Addition is a bold word that sign the sentence belongs to addition error.
- c. *Misformation* is a word with italic style that sign the sentence belong to misformation error.
- d. *Misordering* is a word with italic and underline style that sign the sentence belongs to misordering error.

Discussion

In collecting the data, the researcher used test writing as research instrument. The researcher provided data which have researched based on the theory used. The aimed of the research were to identify students' errors in using simple present tense in writing descriptive text made by the eleventh grade students of SMA N 2 Tolitoli in the academic year of 2019/2020. The students must be considering sentence composition in many aspects like grammar and vocabulary. Thus, to realize the aim, this research had to answer the research questions. The research question was "What types of students' errors in using simple present tense in writing descriptive text made by the eleventh grade students of SMA N 2 Tolitoli in the academic year of 2019/2020?"

In this section, the researcher classified the errors from the students' writing test into four types (omission, addition, misordering and misformation). It was found 129 numbers of errors. Omission is characterized by the absence of an item that must appear in well-formed utterance. In this research was found 39 errors on percentage 30.23 %. Based on the result from the students' writing test, it was found that most of students make an errors in writing auxiliary be "am, is, are" they always forget to write down it, moreover it is very important in sentence, because it is as alternate verb. If there is not verb or auxiliary in a sentence, the sentence is fail or unclear. And most of students also always do not write punctuation mark, especially in apostrophe. Apostrophe sign a noun has something. It same with the others, the students also forget to write down article, verb, conjunction, suffix, preposition and other. It means that the students still less knowing how to write down the correct sentence.

The second is addition error; 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. In this research is found 22 students' errors wit percentage 17.06%. The most errors that always the students make are in conjunction and double mark (be). In conjunction, it is always happen because the student always use for connecting the sentence that is not equivalent. It always happen in conjunction "and" and "but". And also in double mark (be), the students always write down coincide with verb "have". It always happen because the students is still less knowing if in a sentence only need one verb or auxiliary to make the sentence clear. Beside that the students also make errors in double mark (verb), suffix, preposition, apostrophe, article, and other.

The third is misformation errors. It is characterized by the utilizing of the wrong form of the morpheme or structure. It is found that exist 62 students' errors in this research with percentage errors is 48.06%. This is the highest rank of students' errors. It is found in students' writing product that become the greatest errors is in using personal pronoun, auxiliary be and then in using verb.

In errors of using personal pronoun, this is always happen because the students always use personal pronoun but it is not suitable with what is necessary in the sentence. The actually the students have to change personal pronoun become possessive pronoun. It can be known with see the context and what actually the information from the sentence. And there are still errors that be found in this research except those. In errors of auxiliary be, it often happen on using auxiliary be, the student always writ down auxiliary be in past form not present. In errors of verb, it often happen on using verb “have”, the students always use the verb without see what kind actually the subject of sentence. The subject of the sentence that always be getting errors is third – person singular “she/he”. It is known that if the subject of sentence is third-person singular, the rule is the verb has to use addition suffix “-es/s” except in verb “have”. It has to be changed to become “has”. Because the reason the student has to use the verb “has” if get the same finding on other situation. There are errors in using auxiliary be, do, article, preposition, language, and other. The students have to know changes of the word if it is seen from the context of the sentence.

The last is misordering error, misordering errors are categorized by the incorrect placement of a morpheme or group of morpheme in an utterance. This errors is most less found in this students’ writing. It has 6 errors on percentage 04.65%. It is only in the phrase. The students always change the position of modifier and head of phrase. It happen because the student is still influenced by their mother tongue, the student has to always practice to use phrase, learn how to put modifier and head in a phrase.

Based on the explanation of discussion above, the researcher had answered the first question of research question, which it was known from finding of student writing product. The highest error happened in misformation with 62 errors no percentage 48.06%. The second rank is omission errors with 39 errors on percentage 30.23 %. The third rank is in addition errors with 22 errors on percentage 17.06%. And the last is in misordering with 6 errors on percentage 04.65%.

Conclusion

Based on the research finding and discussion, the researcher can draw conclusion that the eleventh grade students of SMA N 2 TOLITOLI was still difficult in writing simple present tense. It was proven from analyzing the students’ writing errors. It is shown by the students’ error in their writing. It can be seen that the types of students’ errors are following: The highest error happen in misformation with 62 errors no percentage 48.06%. The second rank is omission errors with 39 errors on percentage 30.23 %. The third rank is in addition errors with 22 errors on percentage 17.06%. And the last is in misordering with 6 errors on percentage 04.65%. To minimize the error in the next time, the students must learn more, always practice, and study hard.

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