

GRAMMATICAL ERROR ANALYSIS IN RECOUNT TEXTS MADE BY THE STUDENTS OF COKROAMINOTO UNIVERSITY OF PALOPO

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Abstract

This study aimed to find out (1). Grammatical errors in recount text made by the English Department students of the second and the sixth semester of Cokroaminoto University of Palopo, (2) the frequent grammatical errors made by the second and the sixth semester students of English department students (3). The difference of grammatical errors made by the second and the sixth semester students. The sample of the study was 723 sentences made by 30 students of the second semester and 30 students of the sixth semester students in academic year 2013/2014 that were taken by cluster random sampling technique. The sentences were 337 (46.61%) simple sentences, 83 (11.48%) compound sentences, 218 (30.15%) complex sentences, 85 (11.76%) compound complex sentences. The data were collected by using two kinds of instruments namely: writing test to find the students' grammatical errors and questionnaire to find the solution to prevent or minimize errors. Data on the students' errors were analyzed by using descriptive statistics. The results of the study showed that the students made 832 errors classified into 13 types of errors which consisted of 140 (16.82%) errors in production of verb, 110 (13.22%) errors in preposition, 106 (12.74%) errors in distribution of verb, 98 (11.77%) miscellaneous errors, 82 (9.85%) errors in missing subject, 67 (8.05%) errors in part of speech, 61 (7.33%) errors in irregular verbs, 58 (6.97%) other errors in verb groups, 52 (6.25%) errors in the use of article, 24 (2.88%) errors in gerund, 18 (2.16%) errors in infinitive, 11 (1.32%) errors in pronoun/case, and 5 (0.6%) errors in questions. The top six frequent grammatical errors made by the students were production of verb group, preposition, distribution of verb group, miscellaneous error, missing subject, and part of speech. The difference of both groups was the frequency in committing errors such as part of speech, irregular verb, infinitive verbs, and other errors in verb.

Keywords: *grammatical error analysis, recount text*

Abstrak

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui (1) kesalahan gramatikal yang dibuat oleh mahasiswa dalam teks *recount* semester

dua dan semester enam jurusan Bahasa Inggris Universitas Cokroaminoto Palopo, (2) kesalahan gramatikal yang sering dibuat oleh mahasiswa, (3). Perbedaan kesalahan gramatikal dari kedua kelompok mahasiswa. Jenis penelitian ini adalah penelitian deskriptif. Sample penelitian ini adalah 723 kalimat yang dibuat 30 mahasiswa semester dua dan 30 mahasiswa dari semester enam jurusan Bahasa Inggris Universitas Cokroaminoto Palopo tahun pelajaran 2013/2014 yang diambil dengan menggunakan cluster random sampling. Kalimat tersebut terdiri dari 337(46.61%) kalimat *simple*, 83(11.48%) kalimat *compound* 218 (30.15%) kalimat *complex*, 85 (11.76%) kalimat *compound complex*. Data penelitian dikumpulkan dengan menggunakan dua jenis instrument: tes menulis untuk data kesalahan gramatikal mahasiswa. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa membuat 832 kesalahan yang diklasifikasikan ke dalam 13 tipe kesalahan gramatikal terdiri dari 140(16.82%) kesalahan dalam *production of verb*, 110(13.22%) kesalahan dalam *preposition* 106(12.74%) kesalahan dalam *distribution of verb*, 98(11.77%) kesalahan dalam *miscellaneous errors*, 82(9.85%) kesalahan *missing subject*, 67(8.05%) kesalahan *part of speech*, 61(7.33%) kesalahan dalam *irregular verbs*, 58(6.97%) kesalahan lain dalam *verb*, 52(6.25%) kesalahan dalam penggunaan *article*, 24(2.88%) kesalahan dalam *gerund*, 18(2.16%) kesalahan dalam infinitive, 11(1.32%) kesalahan dalam *pronoun/case*, and 5(0.6%) kesalahan dalam *questions* Enam kesalahan gramatikal yang paling sering dilakukan mahasiswa adalah *production of verb group*, *preposition*, *distribution of verb group*, *miscellaneous error*, *missing subject*, and *part of speech*. Perbedaan kesalahan gramatikal dari dua kelompok mahasiswa adalah frekuensi dalam membuat kesalahan seperti *part of speech*, *irregular verb*, *infinitive verbs*, and *other errors in verb groups*.

Kata kunci: analisis kesalahan grammar, teks recount

Introduction

Writing plays important roles in each major. In all subjects at school and college, the ability to express thoughts clearly is an essential basis for success. In science, writing is used to record the inventions or knowledge in systematic ways. In school and college the students must master writing for academic purposes as most of their tasks must be completed in written work such as writing report, essay, paper, project, article, thesis, dissertation, and exam answer. In short, writing skill is required in academic and science for theoretical reason.

For years the students at school study English as a foreign language. The students in high school have exposed English since they were in junior high

school. Simply they have learned syntax, grammar, and vocabularies which are used to arrange a good writing in foreign language. But writing in English is still difficult task and students' writings still have low quality. The difference, lack of ideas, lack of background knowledge, and not knowing the kinds of compositions are some examples of students difficulties in writing. Besides writing in a foreign language is hard to learn and takes considerable time and effort. Other reason is the difficulties of the target language such as the complicated structures and rules or the contrast structures between their mother tongue and the target language which make the students feel frustrated to write in English.

There are many approaches, techniques and methods that the researchers have offered to improve writing skill, but it is a question too that why the students' skill of writing is still low. The implementation of those or the difficulties of the target language may be the source of the students' errors. That's why we need to know what makes the students difficult to write well by analysing what errors that they commit. The students' errors can inform the teachers to provide the feedback, reflect on what should be improved, and decide the new approach in teaching writing. Furthermore it informs about what errors that should be prevented before assigning the students to write composition and arrange new syllabus in teaching writing. So, error analysis should be committed for improvement and reinforcement.

The students of English department in Cokroaminoto University of Palopo of course had exposed English more than the other general majors and they should have been able to write well. Unfortunately, the fact showed that they still committed multiple errors in writing English that made it hard to understand their written works. This case needed urgent analysis of what kinds of errors that they frequently committed. Error analysis was newly applied and might contribute to solve the students' writing problems. In this case, recount text was considerable to chose in the study of error analysis in Cokroaminoto University of Palopo. Recount text tells experiences in the past chronologically. In spite of having dealt with this kind of composition, the topic of the writing test led the students to write recount texts as they were requested to write about their past experience. Nonfictive story tells the real event, so the students wrote a text based on the

words that they need to write.

Error analysis in Cokroaminoto University was important to discuss. Error analysis in writing was urgently and new applied in Cokroaminoto University. Therefore the writer applied it to find the kinds of grammatical error and the frequent errors made by the students in writing recount text to provide information for the teachers in giving feedback based on the students' errors.

Review of Literature

Concept of Error

Basically error and mistake have difference. Native speakers are assumed to have perfect knowledge of their language system, but somehow they produce utterances which are judged ungrammatical by the other native speakers. They fail to utilise a known system correctly. This case is called mistake. While errors, typically produced by people who do not yet fully command some institutionalised language system (Corder in Kisella, 1978:63). He then explains that errors were the result of interference. The difficulties of learners could be predicted by a comparison or contrast between the structures of the mother tongue and the target language and appropriate steps could then be taken to minimize the difficulty and reduce the interference. Dulay et al in La Mae (2010:18) state that errors are the flawed side of learner speech of writing. They are those parts of conversation or composition that deviate from some selected norm of native language performance in the written or spoken medium. Collection errors from both media and modes is possible. Then Richard in La Mae (2010: 18) adds that the use of linguistic item (e.g. a word, a grammatical item, a speech act) in a way which a fluent or native speaker of the language regards as showing faulty or incomplete learning. Some errors in language acquisition commonly occur and it can be a discussed research in applied linguistics.

Classification of Errors

Loarch in Nurhidayah (2013:11) divides error into two categories. They are global and local error. Global errors are those which affect the overall sentences organization significantly, while local errors are those affect single element (constituent) in a sentence. Richard in Nurhidayah (2010:11) classifies the error into two categories. The first is interlingual error. It is caused by mother

tongue interference. The second is intralingual error or developmental error. It is caused by the difficulties of the languages structures learned. Corder (1974) stated that the level of interference in the learning of English language (L2) is correlated to the types and amount of mistakes made by these students. This is evident, especially in the early stages of learning English language. He classified errors into omission, addition, substitutions and word order. (Ellis, 1997:18) also divides errors into omission (leaving out an item that is required for an utterance to be considered grammatical, misinformation (using one grammatical form in place of another grammatical form), misordering (putting the words in an utterance in the wrong order). (Els, 1987:47) states that errors cannot always be easily identified. The notion of error presupposes a norm, and norms, in the turn, are dependent on, among other things, the medium (spoken or written language), the social context (formal or informal, and the relation between speaker and hearer (symmetrical or asymmetrical).

The sources of error

According to (Richard in Els, 1984:53) there are four major types of errors or causes of intralingual (developmental errors) as follows:

- a. Overgeneralization is generalization or transfer as the use of previous available strategy in new situation. The learner creates a deviant structure on the basis of his experience of other structures in the target language. For example he can sings, we are hope, it is occurs, he come from. Overgeneralization commonly involves the creation of one deviant structure in place of two regular structures as the learner may reduce his linguistic burden
- b. Ignorance of rule restriction is closely related to the generalization of deviant structures. It is a failure to observe the restriction of existing structures. That is application of rules to contexts they do not apply. The man I saw him violates the limitation on subject on structures of whom. I made him to do it ignores restriction on the distribution of make. In short they try to apply an analogy of previous knowledge of language rules.
- c. Incomplete application of rules occurs as the learners try to produce acceptable utterances. For example, across background language, systematic

difficulty in the use of question can be observed. The use of question is to elicit sentences.

Here are the examples:

Teacher's question	Student's response
What was she saying?	She saying she would ask him
What does she tell him?	She tell him to hurry
What's he doing?	He opening the door
What does he have to do?	He have to do write the address.

- d. False concept hypothesized are sometimes due to poor gradation of teaching items. The form was, for example may be interpreted as a marker of the past tense, one day it was happened and is may be understood to be the corresponding marker of the present tense: he is speaks French. Besides the continuous form instead of the simple past narrative, and also the confusion of the use too, so, and very and the use of come and go.

Another important factor of error is interference which derives from interlingual language (James in Alamin 2012: 3) explored that errors caused by learning strategies include:

- a. Analogy which also seemed a source of errors in the misuse of verbs, prepositions, and pronouns. Students attempt to follow the same forms in different situations. These are some of the examples:

“He showed me the equipment” becomes “He explained me the equipment”

- b. Grammatical errors: these happened in the shape of incomplete grammatical sentence. For instance “I have no idea where is she?” fails to invert subject and verb into appropriate formation. Other example is “I enjoy to read” instead of “I enjoy reading”.
- c. Redudancy. This errors occurs by carrying considerable unnecessary vocabulary such as unnecessary addition of words and indefinite articles.
- d. Overcorrection: learner tend to be over cautious to avoid mistakes. An example of this is “I have son five year(s) old”
- e. Overgeneralization: this errors are caused by the misuse of words or grammatical rules.

The concept of error analysis

Richard in Nurhidayah (2010:24) states that error analysis is the study and analysis of the error made by the second and foreign language learners. Then Edge in Sattayatham (2008:172) defines errors as forms that language users cannot correct by themselves even though they have been taught. It means that error is not merely analyzed but it needs to be corrected and shown to the learners on what error they have made. (James in Sattayatham 2008) adds that language learners cannot correct their errors until they have additional knowledge on the topic. The teachers should give feedback for the students's error explicitly. So they can clarify their errors in language learning process. As Corder in Nurhidayah (2010:25) adds that error analysis has two objects: one theoretical and another applied. By analyzing the students' error the researchers can frame the scope of the students' errors in common. Ellis in Nurhidayah (2010:25) states that some good reasons for doing error analysis. First, learners' error are a concipious feature of learners' language. It shows the students' weakness in learning. Second, it is useful for teachers to know what errors learners make. It informs the teachers to prevent or avoid the students' errors. Third, making error may help learners to learn when they self correct errors that they make. Of course error analysis needs follow up to correct and prevent the students' errors. Error analysis thus provides a check on the predictions of bilingual comparisons, and inasmuch as it does this, it is an important information for the selection of items to be incorporated into the syllabus by describing and classifying his errors in linguistic terms. Byrne (1979:83-84).

Corder in Nurhidayah (2010:25) identifies the model of error analysis into three stages.

1. Data collection
2. Description
3. Explanation

The Procedure of Error Analysis

Some researchers of language teaching explain that steps of errors analysis as follows:

- a. Sample collection

- b. Error identification
- c. Error explanation
- d. Error classification
- e. Error evaluation

In the teaching of language, steps of error analysis are as follows:

- a. Identifying the element of language
- b. Classifying the elements.
- c. Clarifying the structures
- d. Evaluating the structures.

Furthermore Els et.al. (1987:47) describe the steps of error analysis in most complete forms as follows:

1. Identification of errors
2. Description of errors
3. Explanation of errors
4. Evaluation of errors
5. Prevention of errors

Concept of Writing

Writing is a sequences of letters or symbols forming coherent words (Concise Oxford English dictionary). Byrne (1979:1) states that when one writes, he uses graphic symbols: that is, letters or combinations of letters which relate to the sounds we make when we speak Byrne (1979:1) adds that people do not just write one sentence or even unrelated sentences, but they produce a sequence of sentences arranged in particular order and linked together in certain ways. As Lindblom in La Mae (2010:9) states that writing is a way of learning to focus our minds on important matters and learning about them. Writing in English is, thus, a compilation of different types of written texts which are meant to give the students ample opportunity to be exposed to and at the same time be able to ‘play’ with suitable and helpful written forms in English (Dumais, 1988).

The Characteristic of Good Writing

Edelstein and Pival (in Nurfitri 2013:11) state that there are some characteristics of good writing as follows:

- a. Good writing reflects the researchers' ability to use appropriate voice eventhough all good writing convey the sound of some one of talking to someone else, the voice heard though the writing must also suit the purpose and audience of occasion.
- b. Good writing reflects the researchers' ability the first draft and revises it . Revising is the key of the effective writing.
- c. Good writing reflects the researchers' pride in the willingness to spell and punctuate accurately and check word meaning and grammatical relationship within the sentence before, submitting the finish product to the audience.
- d. Good writing reflects the researchers' ability to organize the material into coherent whole so that it moves logically from a central, dominant idea to the supporting point and finally to coincident ending conveying to the needs a sense of well though our plan.
- e. Good writing reflects the researchers' ability to write clearly and unambiguously, to see sentence structure, language, and example so that the one possible meaning is the researchers in intended one.

The Kinds of Compositions

Generally there are four kinds of composition. They are (1). Narration, (2). Description, (3). Exposition, (4). Persuasion. Each has special characteristic to be differentiated. According to Langan (2005: 191) in Anom, narration is commonly called as storytelling, whether we are relating a single story or several stories related to ones. Dumais (1988: 60) adds that a narrative can tell what happens in a matter of minutes or years. Furthermore Alexander (1965) stated that the general outline for stories should be: before the event, the event, and after the event. It shows that narration means telling the story based on event. Recount text is included in narration. But it has some different characteristic. In www.MediaBelajarBahasaInggris.com narrative text has three generic structures which consists of orientation, complication, and resolution. As well a narrative text, recount text has three generic structures. Either orientation, event and orientation. In this case, narrative texts is different from recount text. Complication in narrative text describes a conflict of the story and it is followed by resolution. While recount texts has no conflict in event and it is ended by

reorientation. Other difference between narrative and recount texts is time description. Narrative text tends to use 'once upon time' and 'one day' while recount text uses clearer time description such as 'on Monday', 'in the next day', 'then' and sometimes the date when the event happened. Briefly both have difference in existence of conflict in the story and time description.

The Importance of Writing

Byrne (1979:7) explains that there are some reasons why teach writing.

- a. The introduction and practice of some form of writing enables us to provide for different learning style and needs. Some learners, especially those who do not learn easily through oral practice alone, feel more secure if they are allowed to read and write in the language. For such students, writing is likely to be an aid retention, if only because they feel more at ease and relaxed.
- b. Written work serves to provide the learners with some tangible evidence that they are making progress in the language. It is not likely to be a true index of their attainment, but once again it satisfies a psychological need exposure to the foreign language through more than one medium is likely to be more effective than relying on a single medium alone. Writing also provides variety in classroom activities, serving as a break from oral work, and increases the amount of language contact through work that can be set out of class.
- c. Writing is often needed for formal and informal testing. Although in general oral ability should be measured through oral tests, in practice we are often obliged by circumstances, such as the amount of time we have at our disposal and the number of students there are in the class, to use some form of written test. In some cases, of course, a written test may even be appropriate: for example, making notes while listening. Barraas (1982:12-13) states that writing helps you to observe and think. Preparing an accurate description, like making an accurate drawing helps you to focus your attention on an object or event.

Errors in Writing

Byrne (1979:24) adds that both the difficulty task and, for most students, it's lack of reality tends to result in a large number of errors in written work. Learners easily make errors because information has to be transmitted without any

aid from sources other than the language itself. Other factors are that the learners are discouraged by the failure to express themselves in writing, while teachers were discouraged by the amount of correction involved in students' writing. (Norrish, 1983:65). The errors that occurred on a paragraph level are concluded in paragraph level. Barras (1982:6) stated that there are some common faults of the students' writing. They are lack of planning, failure to answer questions, lack of balance, failure to capture and hold the readers' interest, the use of long word when a short word would be better; and then use more words than are needed to convey the intended meaning precisely; and lack of care.

Byrne (1979:27) adds that one way to help the students write is providing guidance by using the text as basic format for practice even in the early stages. It may be necessary for the mastery of certain types of compound and complex sentence structures which are used in writing. Temple (1978:40-52) adds that the common faults in writing are agreement, case, the confusing of pronouns, the comparative and the superlative, the participial phrase, gerund, the subjunctive, the position of common adverbs, the correct preposition, word choice, mixed constructions, misused words, mixed metaphors, ambiguity, words overworked or loosely used. Again they all deal with grammars.

Method

Research design applied in this study was descriptive research which determines and describes the way things are. The writer used qualitative method to describe the grammatical errors which consisted of 13 types of errors in writing recount texts. The population of this study was the second semester and the sixth students in academic year 2013/2014. The total number of the population was about 600 students from seven classes in which the second semester students consisted about 300 students and the sixth semester students consisted about 300 students as well. The sample of the study was the students of the second and the sixth semester of Cokroaminoto University of Palopo taken by using cluster random technique. The writer took one class from each level, somehow the writer picked 30 samples of students' writings which were considered as qualified to make the data balance. To obtain the data, the researcher employed writing test. The students were requested to write a good recount text. They wrote based on

the following five topics related to recount text as instructed below:

Write a good recount text, based on the following topics:

1. A story about the time when you participated in OSPEK.
2. A story about getting or being lost.
3. A story about the last time you hit someone (or someone hit you)
4. A story about going someplace_to a sport event, picnic, college, party, or concert.
5. A story about your saddest or exciting experiences.

The writing test was used to find the students' errors. The students were given five topics and they were requested to write a good recount text. After collecting the data of the students' writing. The writer classified the grammatical errors made by the second and the sixth semester students of Cokroaminoto University of Palopo into 13 types of grammatical errors.

The data collected from writing test were analyzed by error analysis technique. Error analysis technique of this study comprised of three steps which were adapted from Huang in Yusuf 2011:44(1). Identification of students' grammatical errors, (2.) Classification of the students' grammatical errors into 13 types (3.) Statements of errors frequency and percentage. The frequent errors made by the students in writing recount text were calculated by using simple formula. The percentage of their error types automatically showed the frequent errors committed by the students.

Findings and Discussion

There were 723 units of sentences found in 60 samples of the students writing. 1362 clauses were classified into 938 (68.86%) independent clauses and 424 (31.13%) dependent clauses. The clauses were classified into 337 sentences (46.61%) were simple sentences, 218 (30.15%) were complex sentences, 83 (11.48%) were compound sentences, and 85 (11.73%). It was found that the students made the students made 832 errors classified into 13 types of errors which consisted of 140 (16.82%) errors in production of verb, 110 (13.22%) errors in preposition, 106 (12.74%) errors in distribution of verb, 98 (11.77%) miscellaneous errors, 82 (9.85%) errors in missing subject, 67(8.05%) errors in part of speech, 61 (7.33%) errors in irregular verbs, 58 (6.97%) other errors in

verb groups, 52 (6.25%) errors in the use of article, 24 (2.88%) errors in gerund, 18 (2.16%) errors in infinitive, 11 (1.32%) errors in pronoun/case, and 5 (0.6%) errors in questions. Based on the characteristic of errors, the students made 290 (47.85%) local errors and 271 (52.14%) global errors. Beside that the errors causing factors were 29 (3.8%) overgeneralization, 524 (69.4%) ignorance of the rule restriction, 1(0.13%) incomplete application rules, 28 (3.70%) false concept hypothesis, and 173 (22.91%) interference. The top six frequent grammatical errors made by the students were production of verb group, preposition, distribution of verb group, miscellaneous error, missing subject, and part of speech. The difference of the both groups was the frequency of committing errors such as part of speech, irregular verb, infinitive verbs, and other errors in verb. Briefly, the students made more global errors and the most causing factors of the students' errors was ignorance of the rule restrictions.

Conclusion

This study has diagnosed production of verb, preposition, distribution of verb errors, miscellaneous errors, missing subject and parts of speech as the top six common errors writing committed by the second and the sixth semester students. The major causes of their errors were ignorance of the rule structure and interference. There were few differences between both groups in committing errors. Both groups had difference in frequency of committing such as part of speech, irregular verbs, infinitive verb and other errors in verb (developmental errors). It could be caused by the difficulty level of the target language grammar as Indonesian and English have differences in syntactic features and interference.

It seems that awareness of L1 is considerable to minimize interference.

Suggestion

1. The students should master basic grammar, in this case the lecturers should focus the students on grammar explicitly in teaching writing.
2. The awareness of L1 should be exposed to the students to minimize the interference, specifically the use of verbs.
3. Including or focusing on the use of verb in the next syllabus/teaching process was suggested.

4. It is suggested to the next researchers who are interested in error analysis to analyse the other types of errors which were limited in this study and find the method to prevent or minimize errors in writing recount texts or other genres of text writing.

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