

## Interlanguage Verb Tenses Study: A Case Study on Rena Aprilia

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### ABSTRACT

Among aspect of study on second language acquisition, Interlanguage is one of the most important ones. The presents study explore the interlanguage verb tense that focus on investigating the interlanguage made by Rena Aprilia, a third-semester of communication science student of Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University of Jakarta. Qualitative research with case study design administrated in order to identify and collect the data on Rena's composition on the interlanguage error specifically on using the simple present tense and simple past tense. The author collects the data through fourth-time semi-structure interview and document which derives from Rena's diary about her daily routine. As a result, the author found that Rena creates her language system when producing a target language. The new system is between her target language (English) and her native language (Bahasa Indonesia). There are four Interlanguage patterns made by Rena to indicate the same events which are simple present and three patterns to indicate past events.

**Keywords:** Interlanguage, Verb system, Tenses

<b>First Receive:</b> 23 December 2019	<b>Revised:</b> 16 May 2020	<b>Accepted:</b> 3 June 2020
<b>Final Proof Recieved:</b> 21 June 2020	<b>Published:</b> 30 June 2020	
<b>How to cite (in APA style):</b> Deni, R., Fahriany, & Dewi, R. S., (2020). Interlanguage Verb Tenses Study: A Case Study on Rena Aprilia. <i>ELITE Journal</i> , 2 (1), 41-54.		

## INTRODUCTION

Second language acquisition is a process acquiring the second language after the first language is fully established. In the process of acquiring a second language, a second language learner needs to understand the knowledge and produce a second language in a fixed order as a result of a predisposition from language transferring process. However, this claims stand in contrast to the behavior of second language learner. Based on the author's experience in acquiring a second language, she frequently produces the second language in the inappropriate system whether in writing or speaking. It might come from many factors such as environmental factors and first language interference.

Second language learners often create their system when learning a target language, and It is commonly known as interlanguage. The interlanguage prospects as a separate linguistic system, naturally created by second language learner and it different

from both the learner's native language and the target language being learned, but linked to both native language and target language by interlingual identifications in the perception of the learner Trone (2016). As what has been noted, it can be assumed that interlanguage is a natural process that happens in acquiring a target language when the learners attempt to produce a target language, but it is different from their target language and native language. Moreover, it develops over time as the learners get more and more target language input and try to produce the language in speaking or writing. It is believed to be diverse from both the native learner language and target language, and it can happen in many aspects of target language including in grammar aspect. Additionally, in learning a second language context, knowledge of grammar is considered to be the most crucial and difficult part of a second language learner to master properly.

Grammar is the main rule in student's acquisition in English. It seems to be the heart of language. One of the aspects discussed in grammar is tense. Tense is the rule to express some activity based on the time of the action. There are 16 tenses discussed since junior high school until college level. It includes simple present tense and simple past tense. There are some differences between Indonesia and English, especially about tenses, as follows. In Indonesia, *Saya pergi ke Pasar setiap Minggu*, It shows a habitual action. Then *saya pergi ke Pasar kemarin*, it shows a past event. Based on those sentences it can be concluded that in Bahasa Indonesia language does not need to change the verb, although the sentences have different time indicators.

Meanwhile, in English *I go to the market*, it shows habitual action, and *I went to the market*, it shows the past event. Having said that in the English language, it is a must to change a verb tenses to indicate different action related to the time indicator. From those descriptions, it seems to indicate that students cannot understand an English tense by using Indonesian paradigm.

Therefore, tense is considered as one of difficult aspect to be mastered by second language learners, and they often create the wrong system when producing a sentence whether in written or in oral form in English. This phenomenon is also done by Rena Aprilia. She is a third-semester of communication science student in the Syarif Hidayatullah State University of Jakarta. She learns English in an English club when she was in senior high school then she also speaks English frequently since it is required as a student of communication science major. However, Rena still difficult to use English tense properly; she made a wrong system whether in written or oral form.

Moreover, There have been increasing numbers of research on interlanguage in Indonesia. Resturini 2012. The studies have in particular focused on children interlanguage grammar in speaking. Fauziati 2010, in particular, confirmed that the learner interlanguage grammar was not fossilized; however, none of them tried to depict the typical linguistic system which characterizes learner's interlanguage. The current study would like to address this particular area by exploring the third semester of communication science student's interlanguage verb system denoting, simple present, and simple past tense. Therefore, the writer appoints her research question as follow: What are the patterns of interlanguage made by Rena Aprillia in using simple present, and simple past tense?.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### The Definition of Interlanguage

Interlanguage was proposed by Larry Sinker. Al-Khresheh, M. H. (2015) stated that interlanguage is a linguistic system that produced and used by the second language learner and it is influenced by their first language. When the learners learn the target language, the learners build their system of language which is different from their first language. For the first concept, interlanguage can be defined as “an half way house” between first language and second language. The first language can be said as a language source which contains the first material and mixes with the target language gradually. The result is new and different. It is neither first language nor second language, but something in between.

Fauziati, E., & Maftuhin, M. (2016) named interlanguage as transfer, meaning a transition of prior knowledge from the first language to the second language, as one of the processes that are involved in interlanguage development. Further, she identified two types of transfer: positive transfer and negative transfer. Positive transfer occurs when first language structure or rule is used in a second language utterance, and that use is appropriate or correct in the second language. Meanwhile, the negative transfer occurs when a first language structure or rule is used in a second language utterance, and that use is inappropriate and considered an error. In this process transfer, the aspects of language involved are vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, and all other aspects of language structure and use.

There are five central processes that exist central to second language learning. First language transfer; second, transfer of training; third, strategies of second language learning; fourth, strategies of second language communication; and fifth, overgeneralization of TL

linguistic material Slabakova, R. (2016). Here are the explanations of the five central processes;

a) Language transfer

In this process, some of the rules in the interlanguage system may be the result of transfer from the learners' first language. The learners use their mother tongue to create their language system. To put it in another way, this is not an error, but the process that must be passed by the learners when they learn the second language, for instance: e.g., Today was tiring

b) Transfer of training

In this process, some of the components of the interlanguage system may be the result of the transfer of specific elements through which the learners are taught the second language.

c) Strategies for second language learning

In this process, some of the rules in the learners' interlanguage may be the result from the application of language learning strategies as a tendency on the part of the learners to reduce the TL to a simpler system.

d) Strategies for second language communication

Interlanguage system rules may also be the result of strategies employed by the learners in their attempt to communicate with native speakers of the target language.

e) Overgeneralization

Some of the rules of the interlanguage system may be the result of overgeneralization of specific rules and features of the target language. For instance, the learners will say "I goed home" to overgeneralize English rules by adding -ed at the end of a verb to express the past form. This error happened because of learning strategies.

Several researchers pointed out that the language of L2 learners is systematic which lead to rule-governed **behavior Troike (2016)**. This brings a conception that interlanguage is based on the concept that second language learners have internalized mental grammar, a natural language system that can be described in terms of linguistic rules and principles. Therefore, interlanguage grammars are seen as other grammar, including Universal Grammar (UG) Chomsky (English). UG is a set of the device of grammar that can 'detect' the general principles of any language grammars, can 'predict' the acceptable grammar without prior knowledge about it, and to feel the correctness of structure. It is "the system

of principles, conditions, and rules that are elements or properties of all human languages the essence of human language.”

### **The Characteristics of Interlanguage**

Troike (2016) classify the characteristic of interlanguage into four such as;

1. Systematic, at any spe point or stage of development, the interlanguage is governed by rules which constitute the learner’s internal grammar. These rules are discoverable by analyzing the language that is used by the learner at that time.
2. What he or she can produce and interpret correctly as well as errors that are made.
3. Dynamic, the system that the learners believe in their minds changes frequently, or is in a state of flux, resulting in a succession of interim grammars. Selinker views this change not as a steady progression along a continuum, but discontinuous progression "from stable plateau to stable plateau."
4. Variable, although the interlanguage is systematic, differences in context result in different patterns of language use.
5. Reduce system, both in from function. The characteristic of reduced form refers to the less complex grammatical structures that typically occur in an interlanguae compared to the target language (e.g. omission of inflections, such as the past tense suffix in English). The characteristic of reduced function refers to the smaller range of communicative needs typically served by an interlanguage (especially if the learner is still in contact with members of the L1 speech community)

### **Factors Affecting Interlanguage (Aspects of Interlanguage)**

Interlanguage has been widely influenced by several factors. In this case, we conclude such influence from the perspective of social, discourse, psycholinguistics, and linguistics as offered by Sykes, J. M. (2018).

From the social angle, Ellis introduced three different approaches of interlanguage :

1. Interlanguage involves as stylist continuum that learners develop a capability for using the L2 which is based on all regular language behavior and produces an abstract linguistic system. This vie recognizes two styles of learners: (1) careful style is that when they are consciously involved in choosing of linguistic forms as they need to be correct. (2) The vernacular style is that when the learneris making

spontaneous choices of linguistic forms as in free conversation. In addition, L2 acquisition is influenced by learner's social group.

2. Constructing their interlanguage, the learner uses the input influenced by social factors. Along with this, John Schumann proposed the acculturation model of L2 acquisition. He found fossilization of L2 learners when they fail to acculturate to the target language group that they are unable or unwilling to adapt to a new culture. The main reasons for this failure are social distance and psychological distance, such as language shock and motivation.
3. To shape their opportunities to speak and learn an L2, learners negotiate their social identities in their interactions with native speakers. Thus, it emphasizes the relationship between social context and L2 – acquisition. The learning will be successful when learners can impose their right and to become the subject of the discourse. The process needs investment in which learners will make it when they believe their efforts will cause good return (success).

Those three socio-cultural models of L2 acquisition are less relevant to foreign language setting when most learners' primary contact with the L2 is in a classroom.

### **Definition of Tense**

The word tense is originated from the Latin word *tempus* meaning time. Tense is a form of verb used to indicate the time. In discussing tense and time Alhabbash & Naser, (2016) states that “the words ‘time’ and ‘tense’ must not be confused. The word time stands for a concept with which all mankind is familiar, divided into past, present, and future. The word tense means as a verb form or series of verb forms used to express a time relation. Tenses may indicate whether an action, activity, or state.

Tense commonly refers to the time of the situation which relates to the situation of utterance or at the moment at the speaking. For example, the commonest tenses found in languages are present, past and future: a situation described in the present tense is related as simultaneous with the moment of speaking (John is singing); the situation described in the past as related prior to the moment of the speaking (John was singing); while the situation described in the future as related subsequent to the moment of speaking (John will be singing).

Since tense refers to the time of the situation which relates to the situation of the utterances, it can be described as ‘deictic’ Alhabbash & Naser, (2016). In other words, deictic refers to an interval or period of the time which contains the moment of utterance.

It can be expressed by some words: yesterday, now and tomorrow. English verbs have only two simple tenses, the tenses called the simple present and the simple past. The English tense that would be discussed simple present and simple past.

### **Kinds of Tense**

There are simple and compound tenses in English verbs. The Oxford dictionary of English grammar states some linguists define tense narrowly by form which gives English only two tenses: the present tense, which is lexical verb is the same as the last (except for the -s ending in the third person singular); and the past tense, which in regular lexical verbs has the -ed inflection Rouveret, A. (2018). It means there are two tenses based on the form. There are the present tense and the past tense.

English also has many compound tenses. According to Moeschler, J. (2016), the compound tenses are made by combining two or more verb forms and these combinations may be concerned with time. It can be seen that there are many compound tenses other than two tenses (the present tense and the past tense). Frank (1972) says that there are three past tenses and two future tenses, and then the past perfect is tied in time to the past tense, the present perfect to the present tense, and the future perfect tense to the future tense. It shows there are many kinds of tenses based on time.

The writer concludes that if simple and compound tense is mixed, there are twelve kinds of tenses. They are simple present, simple past, simple future, present progressive, past progressive, future progressive, present perfect, past perfect, future perfect, present perfect progressive, past perfect progressive, and future perfect progressive.

### **Simple Present Tense**

The present tense is the simplest tense in English. The simple present tense is used to show action that happens all the time, for it looked at the finite verbal group without auxiliaries. The present tense is also the only tense that still uses form of distinction for person and number. The distinction is that the third person singular has 's' or 'es' to the form used in other person and number.

To form the negative sentence it has auxiliary verb 'does not' for the third person singular subject (He, She, It), and 'do not' for the subject (I, You, We, They). For the verb to be, do not use an auxiliary verb, even for questions and negatives. For example 'She is not a student'. There are three patterns in simple present tense.

- a. Affirmative: Subject + Verb 1 (s/es)
- b. Negative : Subject + Auxiliary verb (do/does) + Not + Verb 1
- c. Interrogative: Auxiliary verb (do/does) + Subject + Verb 1

### Simple Past Tense

The simple past tense is formed with the past form of the verb which may be either regular, by adding *-ed* to *infinitive* form (incidentally, most verbs are regular) or irregular which must be learned and memorized in each case Mahmud (2000).

Marcella Frank said". . . simple past tense represents definite time; it refers to the event that was completed before the statement is made. It is often accompanied by such expression or definite past as yesterday, last year, two years ago, etc.

Here are three patterns of simple past tense

- a. Affirmative: Subject + Verb 2
- b. Negative : Subject + Auxiliary verb (did) + Not + Verb 1
- c. Interrogative: Auxiliary verb (did) + Subject + Verb 1

### METHOD

The author used a qualitative case study. This is carried out to identify and collect the data on Rena's composition on the interlanguage error specifically on using simple present tense and the simple past tense. The writer used a case study method to conduct this study. As Cresswell (2008) elaborates, case study is an elaboration of a case or multiple cases over time through detailed, in depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context. Also, Hancock and Algozzine (2006) explain that case study is used to analyze and describe a single unit or system bounded by space and time. Moreover, Yin elaborated that case study research investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context.

It can be seen that case study research investigates certain phenomenon happened through detail contextual analysis of a limited number of events, conditions, and their relationship in a certain place in temporary time. A case study was the appropriate method to be used in this study in order to find depth data toward the interlanguage error specifically on using the simple present tense and the simple past tense shared by Rena Aprillia as the a-third semester of communication science of Syarif Hidayatullah Islamic



state university of Jakarta. Furthermore, the data are gathered through fourth times interview and document which derives from Rena dairy about her daily activity.

## FINDING AND DISCUSSION

After collecting the data through interview and written document, the author received two main points. First, Rena made four interlanguage system to indicate simple present as in the sentence *I going to schoolevery day* or Subject + Verb-ing. It supposed to I go to school every day or the pattern should be Subject + Present Verb. This could be the result of learning process from the teacher to the students. In Indonesia, we commonly introduce to the *Verb-ing* rather than the other form. The author also has an experience when she was in junior high school, teacher frequently as some vocabulary by saying: “What is the English word for *menulis*”?.

The second interlanguage pattern made by Rena is Subject + BE + infinitive Verb for example *I am study at library*. This sentence should be formed as *I study at the library* and the correct pattern is Subject + Present Verb it is due to the Indonesian language does not have BE; most of the students assume that BE is a part of pronoun just like *you are= Kamu, I am= saya, and etc*

Additionally, Rena also commonly use Subject + Past Verb to indicate present events as in *I usually woke up at 05.00 am*. However it should be *I wake up at 05.00 am* the subject should ne followed by the present verb.

The last, Rena as an Indonesian student commonly lost the BE even though in nominal sentences, therefore, it creates the new interlanguage system. This interlanguage often loss of students attention since there are no rules in Bahasa language for using the additional word for example in Indonesia we could say *saya cantik*. This patterns also exist when Indonesian students produce the English language they commonly said *she beautiful* rather than she is beautiful. To draws on the fourth patterns clearly, the author presents it in table 1 bellows

*Table 1 Rena’s Interlanguage, Native Language, and Target Language Verb Tense System to Indicate the Present Event*

No	Interlanguage system	Native Language system	Target Language System
1	Subject + Verb-ing	Subject + Verb	Subject + Present Verb
2	Subject + BE + infinitive Verb	Subject + Verb	Subject + Present Verb

3	Subject + Past Verb	Subject + Verb	Subject + Present Verb
4	Subject + Complement	Subject + Verb	Subject + Present Copula BE

The second main point is that Rena also made three new patterns when she attempted to use simple past in the target language as in the bellow

Table 2 *Rena's Interlanguage, Native Language, and Target Language Verb Tense System to Indicate Past Event*

No	Interlanguage system	Native Language system	Target Language System
1	Subject + Present Verb	Subject + Verb	Subject + Past Verb
2	Subject + Present BE	Subject + Verb	Subject + Past Verb
3	Subject + Irregular Verb-ed	Subject + Verb	Subject + Past Irregular Verb

Based on the table above, Rena has three different patterns to indicate the same language feature which is simple present. As in *yesterday I go to the market*, Rena put present verb to indicate the past events. Moreover it should be constructed from subject + Past Verb, for example, *yesterday I went to the market*. What is more, Rena generalize the rule of the regular verb to indicate the past verb for example Rena said that *I eated my lunch yesterday*. The last, , Rena commonly create her own system as in Indonesia we not having BE in a sentence we use the same verb to indicate whether it is the present activity or even past. As an example student said that "I am in Ponorogo two years ago". She used present BE for the past events, and this represents her current knowledge of BE.

Rena produced various' interlanguage. As has been described in those tables above, Rena created different structures to denote the same message. For example, Rena had four variations of verb system to indicate present events as in (. Subject + Verb-ing, Subject + BE + infinitive, Subject + Compliment, and Subject + Past Verb). Of these four verb systems, "Subject + Verb-ing" is most frequently used by the learners *see table 4.7*. The logical explanation for the current result is that the student was more familiar with *Verb-ing* form than other three verb tense systems to indicate present event. It is due to the process of learning English from the English teacher. When teaching a vocabulary teacher commonly as a student by saying ' what is *membaca* in English'. then the student would say reading. In table 3 the author describe about the interlanguage pattern and the number of repetition made by Rena.

*Table 3: Rena's Interlanguage Verb Tense Systems to Indicate Present Event*

No	Rena's Interlanguage System	The total repetition: 46
1	Subject + Verb-ing	24
2	Subject + BE + infinitive Verb	7
3	Subject + Past Verb	9
4	Subject + Complement	11

Here in table 4 bellows, the author presets the interlanguage pattern made by Rena to indicate past event and the number of repetition she made. From the data, Rena is commonly use ed at the end of the verb whether for the regular or irregular verb. She made seven times repetition during the interview. It can be the result of Rena's first language perspective since there is no such rules in Indonesian' language.

*Table 4 Rena's Interlanguage Verb Tense Systems To Indicate A Past Event*

No	Rena's Interlanguage System	The total repetition: 17
1	Subject + Present Verb	4
2	Subject + Present BE	6
3	Subject + Irregular Verb-ed	7

## CONCLUSION

This study had shown that Rena as an Indonesian student who learnt English as a foreign language made her grammatical system when she tried to use simple present tense and simple past tense. It happens since the English language has specific rules to indicate present and past tense events; meanwhile there no specific rules in the Indonesian language. Therefore, Rena creates her language system when she tries to produce target language (English). The system is stuck in between Rena's target language and her native language (Bahasa Indonesia). This phenomenon is commonly known as interlanguage. As a result, Rena made four new patterns or interlanguage to denote simple present tense. Subject + Verb-ing, this is the new pattern that she frequently used to indicate simple present tense.

Moreover, Rena produces three new language system to indicate simple past tense. Subject + Irregular Verb-ed, this is the new pattern that Rena frequently use since regular and irregular verb rules do not exist in Indonesia. Therefore when she tried to

produce a sentence indicate the past event she often generalizes the verb as in her perception past verb form closely to the verb that end with d or ed.

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