

# **AN ERROR ANALYSIS OF NARRATIVE TEXT WRITTEN BY STUDENTS OF ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**

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## **Abstract**

The objectives of the article are:(1) to describe the kinds of errors made by the third semester students of the English Language Education Study Program in writing narrative text and (2) to find out the sources of the errors made by the third semester students of The English Language Education Study Program in writing narrative text. This article is classified into discourse analysis. To analyze the data, the researchers used Dulay et al's theory namely surface strategy taxonomy, communicative effect taxonomy and Brown' theory namely interlingual transfer and intralingual transfer. The data were sentences on narrative texts containing errors taken from weekly journal of the third semester students of the English Language Education Study Program of Sarjanawiyata Tamansiswa University in academic year 2015/2016. There were 152 data containing omission, 98 data containing addition, 432 data containing misformation, and 17 data containing misordering. Meanwhile, the sources of error that the researchers found are 16 errors caused by interlingual transfer and 276 caused by intralingual transfer.

**Keywords:** An Error Analysis, narrative text, and Surface strategy taxonomy.

## **Introduction**

The use of language as a means of communication in the world is very crucial in human life. Language helps people in order to be able to transfer and acquire information in real life both spoken and written communication. Language is always used by all people in many different countries. As we all know, there are a lot of languages all over the world and every nation has a particular language to be used, for instance, Arabic, French, Italy, Spanish, Chinese, and English and so on. However, English becomes one of the international languages that is very popular among people worldwide. Many residents with different backgrounds, genders, religions, cultures and ages around the world use it to communicate to each other. They use it in daily conversation, business or international trade, tourism, education, science, literature (films, western music, and novels), international summit, internet, and so forth.

Because of its popularity and its broad use, many inhabitants around the world are trying to learn and master English in order to be able to communicate in English to each other well. Being able to communicate in English is a special achievement since it can give abundant benefits to those who can achieve it. Those who want to comprehend, master and be able to communicate in English can learn this language either by taking English courses, studying at schools, or colleges in ways of formal or informal. At schools or colleges, English becomes a compulsory subject and target language to be pursued. At colleges, students are taught to master English in all four skills; they are listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Among the four skills, writing is one of the most fundamental productive skills of English language to be learnt at colleges. It is the written communication made on a piece of paper by someone consisting of his/her ideas, feelings (happy, unhappy), desires, experiences, etc. Through this subject, the students will be driven about anything that is related to writing such as language system or grammar, language features, language components, etc. One of the ways to develop writing skill is by including the writing class into a subject at universities. In colleges all

those language skills and its components are not learned simultaneously. They are learnt one by one with the guidance of syllabus and curriculum.

At college, students not only learn English language components and its language skills but also genres of text in writing class. Learning genres of text will lead them to know and get used to writing properly of the language components, generic structures and language features as well and enable them to use the needed language components in writing.

## **Literature Review**

There are so many genres of text. One of them is narrative text. Narrative text is the text that describes the past events. People use it to express their feeling, vision and experience they faced in particular moment in the past. By producing narrative text, students are likely to commit errors because English is not their first language and are still in the learning process.

Errors will be discussed and analyzed in this research since knowing the learners' errors will give beneficial input on the success of the learners and lecturers. Richards (1974: 189) argues that "knowing errors is important to know the process of the second language learning and planning of courses both the teacher and the learners because they will give a crucial information or feedback whether the teaching has been successful or not." It means that errors are something needed to measure the teaching-learning process.

The researchers focus on errors made by the third semester students of the English Language Education Study Program of Sarjanawiyata Tamansiswa University in the academic year 2015/2016. There are several reasons why the researchers conduct the research. First, the researchers discovered that one of the weaknesses of the students is creating the narrative text. Second, the researchers are also interested to know the types of errors that the students make when they are writing narrative text. And the last, the researchers are very motivated to give a great contribution of which result can give beneficial input related to teaching-learning activity in English education department, especially writing class.

In order to analyze errors and sources of error, the researchers apply Brown's theory (Interlingual transfer and Intralingual transfer), surface strategy taxonomy and communicative effect taxonomy proposed by Dulay, *et al.* (1982). The surface strategy taxonomy consists of omission, additions, misformation, and misordering. The communicative effect taxonomy is grouped into global errors and local errors.

## **Method**

This research belongs to discourse analysis since it analyzed how language is used in the written language. The researchers employed document analysis to collect the data. The data of this research were the narrative texts containing errors taken from the students' weekly journal. The technique of collecting the data, firstly, the researchers consulted to an English writing lecturer to get permission for taking the data from the students' weekly journal. After the researchers were allowed to take the data by the lecturer, the researchers looked for the students' journals. Having obtained that journal, the researchers brought it to be examined. To analyze the data, the researchers used Dulay, *et al.*'s theory namely surface strategy taxonomy, communicative effect taxonomy and Brown' theory namely Interlingual transfer and Intralingual transfer. In analyzing the data, firstly the researchers identified the data. Secondly, the researchers classified the data and presented them in the form of table. Finally, the researchers analyzed the data and discussed them based on surface strategy taxonomy, the sources of errors and communicative effect taxonomy.

## Discussion

### 1. The Types of Error

Based on the data analysis, there are 152 errors on omission, 98 errors on addition, 432 errors on misformation, and 17 errors on misordering. The total of errors made by the students is 699. The summary of the data analysis of surface strategy taxonomy is presented in the following:

Surface Strategy Taxonomy Classifications			
Omission	Addition	Misformation	Misordering
152	98	432	17
699 Total Errors N = 30			

From the four types of error classified by Dulay *et al.* (1982), the most dominant error made is misformation (432) and the least of the errors is misordering (17).

### 2. The Sources of Error

The summary of the data analysis in finding out the sources of the error is presented in the following table:

Table 1  
Sources of Error Classification

Sources of Errors Findings		Total
Interlingual Transfer	Intralingual Transfer	
16	276	292

From the two sources of error classified by Brown (2000), interlingual transfer (16) is the least while intralingual transfer (276) is the most frequently occurred. The dominant number of intralingual transfer (276) proves that the students failed to use the new language system (English) correctly. In other words, learners didn't have much knowledge of new language rules so they failed to use the correct form of the new language used.

In this part, the researchers elaborate some data to be discussed.

#### 1. The Types of Error

##### a. Omission

##### **Excerpt 1 sentence 2.14**

*"I got a lot of surprise, gift, and prayer from my family and my friends."*

The erroneous sentence above is classified into *omission* since the learner failed to present the language items needed (Dulay et al., 1982:154). This error is caused by the *omission* of noun inflection or suffix -s (grammatical morpheme) to nouns *surprise*, *gift*, and *prayer*. They all must be pluralized by adding the suffix -s because they all are preceded by the quantity expression *a lot of* and they also refer to countable noun.

##### b. Addition

##### **Excerpt 2 sentence 6.3**

*“She was a new student at there.”*

The erroneous sentence above is classified into *addition* since the learner added unneeded language item (Dulay et al., 1982:156). This error is caused by *addition* of the unneeded preposition *at* (simple addition). It makes the meaning of the sentence redundant. The correct sentence should be *“She was a new student there”*.

c. Misformation

**Excerpt 3 sentence 17.2**

*“There was any Santo Yoseph elementary school.”*

The erroneous sentence above is classified into *misformation* and *omission* since the learner added and omitted language items (Dulay et al., 1982:154-158). Even though the error is also caused by the *omission* of punctuation *hyphen* (-), the researchers just describe *misformation* error in this part. This error is caused by the *misformation* of determiner *any* instead of article *a*. *Any* should be article *a*. The correct sentence should be *“There was a-Santo Yoseph-elementary school”*.

d. Misordering

**Excerpt 4 sentence 12.7**

*“When the break season ended\* by \*bell ringing.”*

The erroneous sentence above is classified into *omission* and *misordering* since the learner deleted and inverted language items (Dulay et al., 1982:156-158). Even though the error is also caused by *omission*, the researchers just focus on *misordering* in this part. *Misordering* of noun *bell* and adjective *ringing*. They should be inverted *the ringing bell*. An *-ing* adjective means that the noun it describes is doing the action (Philips, 2001: 2006-207). The correct sentence should be *“When the break season ended up by the ringing bell, she went home”*

## 2. The Sources of Error

### 1) Interlingual Transfer

**Excerpt 5 sentence 4.3**

*“We had to try to \*independent start from now.”*

The source of erroneous sentence above is interlingual transfer because the meaning of the phrase *to independent* is similar to Indonesian. If it is translated into Indonesian, the meaning will be *“untuk mandiri”*. While, the verb *start* also resembles Indonesian (Brown, 2000:223-225). If it is translated into Indonesian, it means *mulai*. In this case, the learner ignores the rules of English so he/she doesn't know that *independent* is an adjective that must be preceded by *be* verb while the verb *start* must be deleted because it makes the meaning too redundant. To hinder the redundant meaning, the sentence should be *“We had to try to be independent from now.”*

### 2) Intralingual Transfer

**Excerpt 6 sentence 2.2**

*“I and Tirly who \*born in the same month with me, planned will make a BBQ party in the Congot beach, Kulon Progo.”*

The source of erroneous sentence above refers to intralingual transfer because the student failed to generate of the new language rule, English (Brown, 2000: -224). The erroneous sentence above refers to *misordering* of subject *I and Tirly*. *I and Tirly* must be inverted to be *Tirly and I*. The correct sentence should be *“Tirly and I who were born in the same month with me, planned to make a BBQ party in Congot beach, Kulon Progo.”*

### 3. The Types of Error (Communicative Effect Taxonomy)

#### 1) Local error

##### Excerpt 7 sentence 3.1

*“Patih Panti Praja, Tangga Puspowilogo, Panji Semanu Harjodipuro and the Punggawa of Kadipaten Sumengkar **were attend** the meeting”*

It refers to local error because the erroneous sentence doesn't hinder or mislead to communication (Dulay et al., 1982:91). Apparently the addition of the auxiliary *were* and *misformation* of the verb *attend* don't lead the hearers or readers to misunderstanding because the hearers or readers still can figure out what the writer or speaker conveys. The correct sentence should be *“Patih Panti Praja, Tangga Puspowilogo, Panji Semanu Harjodipuro and the Punggawa of Kadipaten Sumengkar **attended** the meeting”*

#### 2) Global Error

##### Excerpt 8 sentence 30.16

*“He **orders** the messenger **to brought forth** the glass slipper but the stepmother **in a ls minute attempt** to prevent her stepdaughter from **better things**, causes the messenger **to trip thus broken the fragile shoe into pieces.**”*

It refers to global error because the error made is too redundant. The reader or hearer cannot figure out what the writer conveys (Dulay et al., 1982:91). This error is caused by *misformation* of the verb *orders*, *brought*, *attempt* and *appear*. The simple present verb *orders* alternated regular past tense verb *ordered*. Past tense verb *brought* alternated infinitive *bring*. The simple present verb *attempt* alternated regular past tense verb *attempted*. The simple present verb *causes* alternated regular past tense verb *caused* (Dulay et al., 1982:158). The verb *orders* should be past tense verb *ordered* since it is preceded by preposition *to* that forms to-infinitive verb. The verb *brought* should be its base verb *bring* since it is preceded by preposition *to* that forms to-infinitive verb. The verb *attempt* should be past tense verb *attempted*. The verb *causes* should be *caused*. The correct sentence likely *“He **ordered** a messenger to **bring** the glass slipper back but the stepmother **attempted** to prevent her stepdaughter from it, saying that the messenger **caused** it broken into pieces.”*

### Conclusion

Students make errors in different types and numbers. Among the four types of error classified by Dulay et al. (1982), the most dominant error made is misformation (432) and the least of the errors is misordering (17). From the two sources of error classified by Brown (2000), interlingual transfer (16) is the least while intralingual transfer (276) is the most. The dominant number of intralingual transfer (276) proves that the students fail to use the new language system (English) correctly. In other words, learners don't have much knowledge of new language rules so the learners fail to use the correct form of the new language used.

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