

AN ERROR ANALYSIS ON STUDENTS' COMPOSITION OF DESCRIPTIVE TEXT AT THE TENTH GRADERS OF SMAN 3 BANGKALAN, MADURA

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Abstract: As one of language skill, writing should be mastered by students. But in fact, a number of them especially pre university students still feel difficulty in it. So, in the sequence of efforts to minimize the errors, this study offers one of valuable ways called error analysis. The present study deals primarily with the result of students' composition by the tenth graders of SMAN 3 Bangkalan, focused on the use of simple present tense in descriptive text and ungrammaticality found in it. The aim of this research are to find out the types of errors and the causes of errors. This research used descriptive qualitative method and data collection technique was documentation. Documentation data had shown that they made diverse errors in their composition. The research instrument was students' worksheet then the researcher analyzed the students' errors. Content analysis is a technique to analyze the data. The result of this research was found that the greatest number of errors was overgeneralization (OG). The students applied a structure that they had already experienced in another new situation. Most of the students made errors caused by intralingual transfer. It means that the first language has influenced them in making composition. Looking at these results, students are not expected to be hopeless in learning English. They must study harder than before by asking their teachers some concepts. Meanwhile, the teachers should apply an appropriate and effective method of errors correction. For the readers, they can learn from the students of this research in order to they do not make the same errors.

Key words: error, error analysis, students' composition, descriptive text

English is studied as a foreign language in formal setting (such as the school), and where English is not normally a language of instruction but simply a branch of study (Richards, 1974: 87). Nowadays English becomes to essential language subject of education issues in Indonesia. Indonesia Government admits as the first foreign language that is taught to Indonesia students. The students learn English from elementary school up to university. Through English language subject, the students hope to have ability and more confidence with English. As a matter of fact many young learners face difficulties to understand English as their

second language, which is different from their mother tongue, grammar structure, vocabulary etc. Consequently, in learning English the

learners have to learn its grammar or structure intensively. The importance of knowing the language components is in the case of daily conversation in English classroom. To converse in acceptable talk, students as both speaker and listener have to master those components. But if there is nothing to do, it means the students can be too difficult not only to speak and to deliver their message but also to comprehend it. Another example is in short-answer students based on text task. Students can answer the questions correctly if only the students understand about grammar and vocabulary used in the passage.

In teaching learning of English, teachers have to be able to make interesting materials for the students in process of teaching and the students have to know how to apply it. The teachers try to revive the students' attention and make them creative and active. Teaching means not only to show the teachers' acquaintance with English knowledge especially in teaching learning of English, but also to show the teachers' talent, experience and handiness of approaching their students to make the class enjoyable, relaxing and interesting to them, so that, the students will grasp the lessons excitedly and interactively (Effendi, 2009). In teaching of English, absolutely, the curriculum is needed to ease the teaching-learning process. Right now, the curriculum which is used in all schools is Competency-based Curriculum. The main objective of Competency-based Curriculum is to teach the students in order that the students are able to communicate both in oral and written by using the appropriate language variety fluently in the interaction and monolog discourse especially that has relation with descriptive, narrative, procedure, recount, report, and news item discourse (*Kurikulum 2004, Bahasa Inggris*).

There are four language skills have to be taught interruptedly namely speaking, listening, reading and writing. Writing skills is one of the four English language skills in addition to listening, speaking and reading. Writing skills include productive or produce other than speaking skills. Writing learning in schools has not been through the correct process. Teachers often delegate the task of writing without giving proper steps to be able to produce good work (Hamdani, 2012). Writing is never one-step action. It needs a long time. It is an ongoing creative act. When the students first write something, the students have already been thinking about what to say and how to say it. Then after the students have finished writing, the students read over what they have written and make changes and corrections. The students write and revise then write and revise again until the students are satisfied that their writing expresses exactly what the students want to say. The process of writing has four steps. In the first step, the students create ideas. In the second step, the students organize the ideas. In the third step, the students write a rough draft. In the final step, the students polish our rough draft by editing it and making revision (Oshima, 2007: 15). As given, there are many texts taught in Senior High School. One of those texts is

descriptive text. Descriptive text is a text that is used to give verbal description of human, objects, performances, scenery, or events. In descriptive text, the sentences are usually kinds of habitual truth. To describe habitual truth the students have to use simple present tense.

The previous studies have shown that students' ability of writing is still needed much attention. Zainuri (2011) concluded on his research that from 273 sentences written by students in SMPN 1 Blega, it was found that there were 128 sentences belonging to verb forms error which classified the students were wrong. It means reaching a half of total given sentences, students still make mistakes. In addition, he stated that the average of the students in SMP 1 Blega the students still in low level in writing skill. Meanwhile, he showed students that from the graduate competence standard of writing formulated on 65, but many students just achieved 55 averagely. As an example, in one sentence of paragraph which was written by student of *SMPN 1 Blega*, *They visit Camplong Beach yesterday*, instead of *They visisted Camplong Beach yesterday*, this is of course ungrammatical and confused to interpret whether event takes place at the moment of writing or at past time since the verb is formed in present tense while adverb refers to past time. Another figure is similar to that given by Ridwan (2011) having reported that only 10 of the 26 (38%) students in *SMP 2 Kamal* who can make the correct sentence pattern. It can be known that not more than a half percent who can write correctly. Thus, taking a look at this fact, it may be written down that English writing skill for students is very complete problems.

In ordinary classroom setting, despite receiving great mount of care and attention, students are still committing some errors in writing text. In this sense, errors must be distinguished from mistake. An error, as Brown (2007) defines, is deviation of systematic competence which can not be self-corrected and is consistently made. On the contrary, a mistake refers to deviation of unsystematic performance, can be self-corrected and of course, inconsistently. Just a simpistic instance, a student who writes *Tino is go to Malang* and on other occasion, writes *He bring some apples*, it may be judged as a mistake. Yet, if, still on other chance, the student keeps on writing such as *Nisa is take my book on the table* or *My mother cook fried chicken*, it can be an error since the student does not have an ability in using tenses. In fact, when the students write down in their composition, the students often make omissions and additions which are not necessary, especially in using simple present tense. Omissions appear when the students omit some elements from sentences. For example, *I ill* the correct one is *I am ill*. Additions are the opposites of omissions. Sometimes, the students add items which must not appear in a the students formed sentence. Example, *He can sings* (modal can is misused) the correct one is *He can sing*. Addition errors often occur in sentences where an auxiliary is required in addition to the main verb and take the tense.

Method

The object of the study is the tenth graders of *SMAN 3 Bangkalan*. It is located in Jl. RE. Martadinata 33, Bangkalan. The data are words containing errors of using simple present tense while the source of data are some pieces of students' worksheets containing descriptive texts written by respondents, consisting of 10 students of the tenth graders of *SMAN 3 Bangkalan*.

The research design implemented in this study is descriptive qualitative. Data collection is an important aspect of any type of research study. Inaccurate data collection can impact the result of a study and ultimately lead to be invalid result. The researcher uses documentations as data collection method. Documentation is a record of past event. It is formed like writing, pictures or works of personal monumental (Sugiyono, 2008: 240). In this research, the researcher asks the English teacher of *SMAN 3 Bangkalan* to submit the students' worksheets which have been written before the research was conducted. Then the researcher analyses the students' error.

In analyzing the data, the researcher employs content analysis method to analyse data which are taken from students' composition. Borg and Gall (1983:512) state that content analysis is a research technique for objective, systematic and qualitative description of the manifest content in communication. Content analysis method may be applied to analyze any form of communication which is usually written such as texts, books, compositions, novels, newspapers, magazines, advertisements and political speech.

After getting the data from sample, the researcher will do some research procedures, there are collecting the students' compositions, read it accurately, identifying the error, classifying the error, and making conclusion.

Result

Table 3.1
The Data of Students' Errors

No	Code	Error and Mistake
1	A She <i>live</i> in Sidoarjo with my father, my brother and my sister.She always <i>make</i> a delicious food for me. She always <i>make</i> a cup of hot milk for me when I go to my home in Sidoarjo.
2	B	My pet <i>very cute</i> <i>it have</i> big piece.... <i>It have</i> green colour and <i>it very beautiful</i>
3	C It always <i>play</i> behind my home. Usually it <i>play</i> with <i>its friend</i> It <i>very happy</i> if I give it favorite food everyday. It <i>want</i> with me everyday and <i>I very love it</i> .
4	D It <i>is have</i> four legs. My frog doll <i>have</i> soft body,.... I very pity it because it s inspiration of someone. when <i>I happy and sad</i> .

	 If I <i>angry</i> to someone I also <i>angry</i> to my frog doll. If my frog doll be lost, I <i>very sad</i> because I <i>very pity</i> it.
5	E She <i>is very love</i> her daughter. She <i>never angry</i> to me. She <i>is make</i> my day colorfull.
6	F She <i>is always give</i> me a love.
7	G He <i>not too handsome</i> .
8	H She <i>live</i> with her mother and her sister. Her father <i>work</i> in Malaysia. She <i>beautiful</i> , she <i>taller than</i> me, She <i>smart</i> and <i>very diligent</i> .
9	I	He <i>is have</i> white skin, he <i>is have</i> shape nose..... His body <i>fat</i> His hobby <i>futsal</i> , his ambition <i>a sailorman</i> I <i>am very love</i> him.
10	J He <i>come</i> from Canada and now he <i>is live</i> in America. He <i>have</i> big house and beautiful house but his house <i>in Canada</i> . He <i>is always look</i> handsome and cool..... and he <i>have</i> many songs..... He always <i>happy</i> and <i>make</i> me proud.

After submitting the data containing errors, the researcher classified their errors based on the types of errors. Some samples of errors found in students' compositions were presented in this sub chapter. Also, to make easier in interpreting the errors, the students' composition consisting of some paragraphs were sorted and presented into some pieces of sentences.

In interpreting the types of students' composition, the researcher took the explanation from Richard (2000) that there were four types of errors. Those were Over-generalization (OG), Incomplete Application of Rules (IAR), Ignorance of Rule Restriction (IRR) and False Concept Hypothesized (FCH). The following sentences were found in students' composition;

- (1) She *live* in Sidoarjo with my father, my brother and my sister (A)
- (2) She always *make* a delicious food for me (A)
- (3) It always *play* behind my home (C)
- (4) It *want* with me everyday (C)
- (5) She *live* with her mother and her sister (H)
- (6) Her father *work* in Malaysia (H)
- (7) He *come* from Canada (J)

The verb *live*, *make*, *play*, *want*, *work* and *come* in those sentences were classified as errors because they appeared more than once as Brown (2000: 217) stated that an error is a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker which reflects the competence of the learner. Based on the types of errors, the verbs *live*, *make*, *play*, *want*, *work* and *come* were categorized as Incomplete Application of Rules (IAR) because the students applied the rule of using verbs in simple present by adding *-s/-es* to plural pronoun (you, they, we). Whereas, addition *-s/-es* of verb 1 was only to third person singular (she, he, it). Therefore, the students did not add *-s* in the verbs *live*, *make*, *play*, *want*, *work* and *come*. In the sentence (1.A), (2.A), (3.C), (4.C), (5.H), (6.H), (7.J) the students omitted tense marker *-s* in the end of *live*, *make*, *play*, *want*, *work* and *come*. They

were verb cases in the simple present which should be *lives, makes, plays, wants, works* and *comes*. Richard (2000: 174) stated that Incomplete Application of Rules (IAR) was the occurrences of structures whose deviant represents the degree of development of the rule required to produce acceptable utterances.

The other types of errors included in Overgeneralization were some sentences written by students below:

- (8) It *is have* four legs (D)
- (9) She *is very love* her daughter (E)
- (10) She *is make* my day colourfull (E)
- (11) He *is have* white skin (I)
- (12) I *am very love* him (I)
- (13) He *is always look* handsome and cool (J)

All sentences given above addressed Overgeneralization but they were of variant cases. Virtually, this type of errors implied the use of previously available strategies in new situation as Richard (1974:74) stated that overgeneralization covers instance where the learner creates deviant structure on the bases of his experience of other structure in the target language.

The other types of errors included in Overgeneralization were some sentences written by students below:

- (14) It *is have* four legs (D)
- (15) She *is very love* her daughter (E)
- (16) She *is make* my day colourfull (E)
- (17) He *is have* white skin (I)
- (18) I *am very love* him (I)
- (19) He *is always look* handsome and cool (J)

Overgeneralization errors arose when the students applied a structure that they were already experience in another new situation. Taking a look at the sentence (15.D), (16.E), (17.E), (18.I) and (19.J) presented tobe *is* which was not required, they should be *it has four legs* (15.D), *she loves her daughter* (16.E), *she makes my day colourful* (17.E), *he has white skin* (18.I) and *He always looks handsome and cool* (19.J). Moreover, in those sentences the students omitted of the third person *-s*. In more detailed, the students knew at first that tobe *is* was used to the third singular subject (she, he, and it). By analogy, there was something missing, for example in sentence *She is very love her daughter* (16.E) then the student added tobe *is* to the third singular subject. But actually in the sentence (16.E) there was a verb *love*. If the student added tobe *is* in the sentence (16.E), it meant that the student put double predicate in one sentence. As a result, overgeneralization was created. It was applied equally to the sentence (17.E) and (19.J). But, those sentences also can be categorized as False Concept Hypothesized (FCH) error. This type of errors posed how students have faulty comprehension of an item in the target language. The verbs *love, make* and *look*, for examples, were used interchangeably. Similarly, they could happen in the case of tense. In sentences (16.E), (17.E) and (21.J), the students interpreted the tobe

is as a marker of the third singular subject. So, by this interpretation, students produced such *She is make day colourfull* (16.E), *she makes my day colourful* (17.E) and *He is always look handsome and cool* (19.J). The case above is the same as the sentence (18.I) *I am very love him*. The student put auxiliary *am* before verb₁. The student applied the (FCH) errors because the auxiliary *am* just can be applied by using V-ing/V₃.

Besides, there were two students who made mistakes in their composition. Those are classified as grammar mistakes which the students fail to place words in the wrong order in a sentence.

(20) *She is always give me a love* (F)

(21) *He not too handsome* (G)

Based on the sentences above, they were categorized as mistakes because the students were able to correct by himself or herself and they also made the mistake once or not repeatedly. As stated by Brown (2000: 217) that a mistake refers to a performance error that is either random guess or “a slip”, in that it is a failure to utilize a known system correctly. It means that the learners actually have known their own mistakes so that they can easily correct them. In this case the students have already known the grammatical rules of the mistake.

The following sentences were also categorized as Overgeneralization (OG). With the omission of the third person *-s*, overgeneralization (OG) removed the necessity for concord.

(22) *She beautiful* (H)

(23) *She taller than me* (H)

(24) *She smart and very diligent* (H)

(25) *His hobby futsal* (I)

(26) *His ambition a sailorman* (I)

(27) *His house in Canada* (J)

(28) *He always happy* (J)

Those sentences above omitted the tobe *is*. The students should put tobe *is* after the third singular subject. Usually, simple present tense was used in descriptive text and those sentences were classified as nominal sentences. It meant that the sentence was not used verbs but it could be adjective, noun or adverb. In nominal sentences actually tobe *is*, *am* and *are* were used, as in the sentence *she beautiful* (22.H). The word *beautiful* is adjective but the student did not put tobe *is* in the sentence and it should be *She is beautiful*. It was also applied in the sentences (23.H) *she taller than me*, it should be *she is taller than me*. Then, the sentence *she smart and very diligent*, should be *she is smart and very diligent*. Also, in sentence (28.J) *he always happy* should be *he is always happy*. But in the sentences (25.I), (26.I), (27.J) the students translated by using Indonesia rule. They did know the word *futsal* was as noun and the subject *his hobby* was singular pronoun. If the subject is singular, so the students should put tobe *is*. Looking at the sentence, they should be *his hobby is futsal* (25.I), *his ambition is a sailorman* (26.I), *his house is in Canada* (27.J).

After errors examination, the possible causes of errors would be explained here. It had been indicated in the first part of the study that errors were assumed as being the only result of interference of the first language habits to the learning of second language. However, with the field of error analysis, it had been understood that the nature of errors implicates the existence of other reasons for errors to occur. Then, the causes of errors could be categorized within two domains namely interlingual transfer, and intralingual transfer (Erdogan, 2005: 261-270).

The first causes of errors is interlingual transfer. For example, the student may utter *I very love it*, instead of *I love it very much*. The sentence is interfered by the student's mother tongue, as translated form of Indonesia *Saya sangat mencintai dia (binatang)*. Because the word *very* is used to emphasize an adjective or adverb and *very much* is used to modify verbs, the sentence should be *I love it very much*. It was also stated by Brown (2000 : 224) that interlingual transfer was a significant source of error for all learners. The beginning stages of learning a second language were especially weak to interlingual transfer from the native language, or negative transfer, i.e using first language system in second language communication which is different from the system of the second language. It also happened in the sentence (12.D) *I very sad because I very pity it*. The student translated directly into English by using Indonesian grammar. In this case, the word *sad* is not the same as the word *pity*, because *pity* is noun and *sad* is adjective. Based on the previous explanation that *very* is used to emphasize an adjective or adverb, so the sentence should be *I am very sad because I take pity on it*. It is only adjective that can be put after *very*.

Moreover, sentence (13.D) *If I **angry to** someone I also **angry to** my frog doll* was caused by interlingual transfer because the word *angry* has preposition *with*. In this case, the students used the preposition *to* because they thought that the preposition *to* has the same meaning in Indonesia as *pada*.

The second causes of errors is intralingual transfer. The researcher took some examples from the research finding. In sentence *She live in Sidoarjo, She always make a delicious food for me, It always play behind home*, the verb *live*, *make*, *play* can be classified as intralingual transfer because the students applied Verb₁ to all subjects pronoun (she, he, it, they, we, I, you). In fact, the third singular persons, *she* and *he*, need Verb₁ plus *-s/-es*. The students might be caused by the influence of one target language item upon another, as stated by Brown in Erdogan (2005: 261-270) that intralingual transfer result from faulty or partial learning of the target language rather than language transfer.

In addition, this case was also found in the sentence *She is very love her daughter, She is make my day colourfull and He is always look handsome and cool*. The students attempted to use two tense markers at the same time in one sentence since they have not mastered the language yet. When they wrote *She is very love her daughter, She is make my day colourfull and He is always look handsome and cool*, it was because the singularity of the third person requires "is"

in present continuous, and “-s” at the end of a verb in simple present tense. In short, intralingual errors occurred as a result of students’ attempt to build up concepts and hypotheses about the target language from their limited experience with it.

Conclusion and Suggestion

Based on the research finding and data analyzing of students’s errors in their composition, the researcher takes some conclusions that many students got difficulties in their composition, especially concerning with the verb form in their composition of descriptive text. This can be proved by a number of errors found in students’ compositions. Many pupils frequently omitted the tobe *is/am/are* in the present verb form or they added the item which is really negligible. A blunder in forming the verb or putting the words in wrong order is another fact made by students. Undoubtedly, this come to be an evidence that the tenth graders of SMAN 3 Bangkalan make diverse error. Simply, those errors involved Overgeneralization (OG), Ignorance of Rule Restriction (IRR), Incomplete Application of Rules (IAR), and False Concept Hypothesized (FCH) errors wherein the rank of their frequency is variously. Among those errors, seemingly the (OG) errors was most often made by the students.

Besides analyzing the types of errors, data also goes to display wherefore students make the errors. In the other word, on the basis of data, students commonly employ what previous structure they knew and applied to new situation with another rule. There are two causes of errors which too potentially influence of the students to commit the errors. They are intralingual transfer and interlingual transfer. Intralingual transfer is caused by the student’s first language. However, this should not be confused with behaviouristic approach of language transfer. Meanwhile, interlingual transfer is caused by the influence of one target language item upon another. For example, learners attempted to use two tense markers at the same time in one sentence since they have not mastered the language yet. Based on the data, most of the students made errors were caused by intralingual transfer.

Based on the result of the research and the conclusion above, the researcher suggests:

a. The Teachers

1. To correct the students’ errors, an English teacher should apply an appropriate and effective method of errors correction. Teachers must identify and explain them with serious-minded. In fact, for correcting the students’ error, is a part of evaluation in teaching learning process whereby many teachers incline to feel lazy to do.
2. Teacher must know that error is natural matter which can not be omitted rather than being able to be minimized.

3. Teacher should encourage students by interposing how English has important role in this era.

b. The Students

1. Students should keep in mind that leaving out from the errors, they can be better in further learning.
2. Considering the errors as one natural phenomenon, so that the students are not expected to be hopeless in learning English.
3. Students should ask to the teacher some concepts clearly, in order to they can minimize the errors in the next time.

c. The Readers

The readers should take valuable lesson from students in this study. By understanding the types and the causes of errors, it is expected that they do not make the same errors as the students had made in their composition of this research.

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