

An Analysis Students' Errors in Using Past Tense in Writing Narrative Text on Eleventh Grade Students of SMA Negeri 1 Aek Natas

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ABSTRACT

This research is intended to answer these following question, namely: What types of errors are made by the eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri 1 Aek Natas in using Simple Past Tense in writing narrative. The objective of this study was to know and explain the most frequent errors made by the first grade students of SMA Negeri 1 Aek Natas in writing narrative focused on simple past tense. The classification of errors in this study is divided into four categories; they are omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. The subject of this study consists of 20 students of the first grade of senior high school who have more than 100 words writing. The method used in this study was descriptive analysis to describe students' errors and analyze the data by using formula: $P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$, P=Percentage, F=Frequency of errors made, N=Total of students' errors. The data was taken from the test; it was written test. The findings showed that there are 152 errors made by the students. The most frequent errors made by the students in their narrative writing focused on the use of simple past tense is misformation which consists of 82 errors or 54%, it is followed by omission with 40 errors or 26%. The next is misordering which consists of 21 errors or 14%. And the last is addition with 9 errors or 6%.

Keyword: Students' Errors, Past tense, Writing Narrative Text

INTRODUCTION

English language teaching includes four language skills such as Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing (Harmer, 2014). Writing is a complete skill among Listening, Speaking, and Reading (Grellet, 2009). Writing is the most difficult skill to learn because it needs hard thinking and produces words, sentences, paragraphs at the same time. That's why writing is the highest order thinking. Narrative writing is a kind of writings which becomes one of the lesson which is taught in Senior High School. According to syllabus Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan (KTSP) 2006, in Indonesia, Senior High School students have to master some types of paragraphs. The first grade students have to master

recount, narrative, procedure, descriptive and news item text. The second grade students need to master narrative, report, and analytical exposition text. Meanwhile, the third grade students have to master narrative, spoof, and hortatory exposition text. In writing narration, the students have to pay attention about simple past tense because it is commonly used in writing narrative. Hence, narrative writing is also the reason why writing becomes difficult for students.

In this case, students who are learning to write narration may produce many errors. Such as in structure, they often make errors in forming simple past tense. Those are the reason why the writer is interested in analyzing students' narrative writing. In this case, the writer wants to find out the grammatical errors that were made by the eleventh grade of senior high school in their narrative writing.

Theoretical framework

1. Error Analys

1.1 Definition of Error Analys

According to James (James, 2007) The definition of Error Analysis came from Carl James in his book, "Error analysis is the process of determining the incidence, nature, causes, and consequences of unsuccessful language." "error analysis is a type of linguistic that focuses on the errors learners make in producing the target language and the target language form itself" (Gass, Susan M., 2008)

1.2 Distinction Between Error and Mistake

Error is systematic deviance which is made by the learner intentionally; it reflect his knowledge since it is not caused by performance failure, and it cannot be self-corrected by the learner. Meanwhile, mistake is not systematic deviance which is made by the learner either intentionally or unintentionally; it is caused by performance failure, such as fatigue, memory lapses, etc., and it can be self-corrected by the learner.

1.3 Procedures in Error Analysis

Gass and Selinker in their book "Second Language Acquisition" that consists of six steps: Collect data, Identify errors, Classify errors, Quantify errors, Analyze source, Remediate.

1.4 Types of Error

The classification is given by Corder. He classifies the errors into four main categories; they are: (Corder, 2012:49)

1. Omission. Error of omission is where some element is omitted which should be present.
2. Addition. Error of addition is where some element is present which should not be there. Learners do not only omit element which they regard as redundant but they also add redundant element.

3. Selection. Error of selection is where the wrong item has been chosen in place of the right one.
4. Misordering. Error of ordering is where the elements presented are correct but wrongly sequenced.

1.5 The Goal of Error Analysis

According to Selinker and Gass (2008:103) “the goal of error analysis is clearly one of pedagogical remediation”. It implies that the aim of error analysis is evidently education remediation.

2. Nature of Grammar

Grammar is a set of rules derived from a language that enable people to understand what they read or what they construct in sentences or expressions when they communicate. Grammar is the way of the spoken and written language to be organized. It is concerned with the order of word groups, clauses and sentences and morphemes in words. It is closely related to generic structure and cohesion.

3. Simple Past Tense

3.1 Definition of Simple Past Tense

Simple past tense is used to express a definite event in the past. And also the simple past is used to define the situation in the specific time. The simple past shows the situations or activities that began and ended in the past.

3.2 Form of Simple Past Tense

Chuan and Hui (2011:297) states that English verbs are divided into two classes; they are regular form and irregular form. These classifications come from the way the verb forms, its simple past and past participle. Regular verbs have predictable past tense form, ie-d or – ed is added to the end of the base form.

Furthermore, Mahmud (2009:98) argued that “Simple past tense is formed with past form of the verbs which may be either regular, e.g. by adding – *ed* to the infinitive (incidentally, most verbs are regular) or irregular must be learned in each case.

Tunbull (2008:175) said, “The simple past tense in regular verbs is formed by adding *ed* to the infinitive...., verbs ending in *e* only added by *d*, the negative of regular verbs is formed with...., the *did not*(*didn't*) and the infinitive...., the interrogative of regular verbs is formed by *did* + subject infinitive.”

3.3 Some Difficulties in Simple Past Tense

3.3.1 Difficulties in the form

Many students have some difficulties in forming simple past tense especially in forming irregular verb. To produce the correct form, they need to analyze the changing of the verb. Sometimes they over generalized the rule by adding –*ed* at the end of the verb which can cause an error.

3.3.2 Difficulties in the usage

The usages of simple past tense are for stating the activities or events that have started and finished in the past. So, there is a particular time when someone or people doing the activities. Usually, there is the specific time signals such as, *last*, *...ago*, *yesterday*, and so on. Sometimes, the students get confused when the time they have to use the simple past tense.

4. Writing

4.1 Definition of Writing

Writing can be said as a media for students to develop their language skill because from writing they can use their knowledge of the target language that they have been learnt.

4.2 Kinds of writing

Generally, there are three kinds of writing; those are Free Writing, Controlled Writing, and Guided Writing as explained by experts below:

- a. Free Writing. It means that in free writing, the students just write anything what they want to write, without worrying about spelling or grammar, and do not stop until they run out of something to say in their writing.
- b. Controlled Writing. In controlled writing, the students are focused on getting words down on paper and in concentrating on one or two problems at a time; and the technique which is considered by her is the students are given a task to work such as an outline to complete, a paragraph to manipulate, a model to follow, or a passage to continue.
- c. Guided Writing. In this kind of writing the students are given a first sentence, a last sentence, an outline to fill out, a series of question to respond to, or information to include in their writing.

4.3 Types of Writing

According to James A. W. Heffernan and John E. Lincoln in their book "Writing A College Handbook", there are three types in writing development:

- a. Description. Description is writing about the way persons, animals, or things appear. It normally takes one of three forms.
- b. Narration. Narration or story telling is writing about a succession of events. The simplest kind of narration follows chronological order: the order in which the narrated events actually occurred or could have occurred. The writer can use events out of the chronological. It means that the writer uses the flash back story.
- c. Exposition. Exposition is writing with a referential aim. It seeks to explain someone or something in the world outside the writer. The exposition gives the reader information or explains something.

5. Narrative Writing

5.1 Definition of Narrative Writing

Narrative writing is a writing which tells about the story of events in a period of time. Narrative writing is not only about fiction writings, but also about

scientific writing can be written in a narration. It presents action with variety of purposes.

5.2 The Purpose of Narration

Clouse (2013:45) gave three purposes of narration:

- a) *To express your feeling*, you could narrate an account of your final visit with your grandfather for example.
- b) *To inform your readers*, you could narrate an account of a typical day for your grandfather, pointing out the advantages he enjoyed because he lived at the retirement home for example.
- c) *To persuade your readers*, you could narrate an account of one or more of your own experiences, tell the benefits you and the residents enjoyed as a result.

To sum up, actually the purpose of narration is to amuse and entertain the readers. Make them feel including in the story while they are reading and also to inform and persuade the readers about the story.

5.3 Elements of Narration

Biber (2011:124) said that “every narrative has six elements – the *who*, *where*, *when*, *what*, *why*, and *how* of the event. The point of view from which the story is told also influences its effect on the audience. Who was involved? Where did the action take place? When? What happened? How did it happen? Why did it happen? Who is the narrator?”

5.4 Narrative Time Signals

The writers use three methods to signal shifts in narrative time: clock time, temporal transitions, and verb tense.

- a. Clock time, many writers use clock time to orient readers and to give a sense of duration.
- b. Temporal transitions, temporal transitions mean the words and phrases that locate a point in time or relate one point to another. Some familiar ones include *then*, *when*, *at that time*, *before*, *after*, *while*, *next*, *later*, *first*, and *second*.
- c. Verb tense, indicates when the actions occur and whether they are complete or in a progress.

5.5 Taking a point of view

Basically, writers use two points of view (Axelrod and Cooper, 2013:399):

- a. First person, is used to narrate action in which the writer participated. Typically, the writers use the first-person pronoun *I* in first person point of view.
- b. Third person, the writers use the third-person pronouns *he*, *she*, and *they* instead of the first person *I* or *we*.

METHODOLOGY

In this study, the researcher will use the descriptive qualitative method. The researcher will do some procedures to have the result of the research. First, the researcher will give the written test to the students of XI IPS 1 of SMA Negeri 1 Aek Natas; then the researcher will collect the paper test from the students as the data. Second, the researcher identifies the errors of the tenses which are made by the students. Third, the researcher will describe and classify the errors of the tenses based on types of errors from Dulay (2014:67), those are Addition, Omission, Misformation, and Misordering. The next, the researcher counts those errors to find out which types of error which the students make the most. Last, the researcher interprets the data and concludes the result of the research.

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The writer presented the identification of errors in the form of table below:
Table 4.1. Recapitulation of Types of Errors in Narrative Writing
Focused on Simple Past Tense

No	Name	Types of Errors				Jlh
		Misinformation	Omission	Misordering	Addition	
1.	AS	2	3	1	1	7
2.	BA	5	2	2	0	9
3.	DA	9	0	0	0	9
4.	ESR	2	3	2	0	7
5.	ES	8	0	0	0	8
6.	EYL	2	0	1	0	3
7.	LH	6	1	1	1	9
8.	MD	2	3	0	0	5
9.	MSR	3	3	2	0	8
10.	MP	5	2	0	0	7
11.	NHH	3	3	2	1	9
12.	RAP	3	2	1	2	8
13.	SF	7	0	1	0	8
14.	SA	2	3	2	0	7
15.	SM	7	0	0	2	9
16.	SM	3	3	1	0	7
17.	TAP	4	2	2	0	8
18.	TA	2	3	0	0	5
19.	US	5	3	1	0	9
20.	YF	2	4	2	2	10
Jumlah		82	40	21	9	152

Note:

A (Very High) = 0 – 20

B (High)	= 21 – 40
C (Average)	= 41 – 60
D (Low)	= 61 – 80
E (Very Low)	= 81 - 100

Based on the data analysis of the research findings, it can be seen that the most common error is misformation error with 82 errors or 54%. The writer concludes that the use of past forms is main aspect that causes this type of error. The students did not pay attention of these aspects when they made the writings. Especially in irregular verbs, they did not know how to change it in the past forms. It happens because in irregular verb so many rules that they have not known. In addition, when they produced a sentence in simple past, they often genre the past forms rules. They are still confused to differ between regular and irregular verbs. It means the teacher needs to pay more attention to this problem.

The second common error which is committed by the students is omission with 40 errors or 26%. The students committed this error because they omit a word or verb that should be present in correct constructions in Simple Past tense. They often omit the suffix –ed, whereas they need to put it due to they have to write in past forms. They did it because they were still confused how to write a correct sentence in Simple Past Tense. Therefore, the teacher should give more explanation about how to write a correct sentence in Simple Past Tense.

Another error which is committed is misordering error with 21 errors or 14%. The students committed this error because they are still influenced by their first language in writing a sentence in English, especially in narrative text. The writer interprets that the students have not understood how to write a good sentence in English. They have difficulties in arranging a good sentence since they have to write a subject, predicate, object, and adverb in the correct order.

The last error is addition error with 9 errors or 6%. The students made addition errors because they put the words that should not present in a correct sentence. The writer interprets that the students committed the error due to they did not pay attention of this aspect. They wrote because they did not realize that they should write Simple Past Tense. They are still confused to differ when they have to use Simple Past tense and when they have to use Simple Present Tense. That's why the teacher should give a clear distinction between them. Regarding the classification of types of error, it is theoretically based on Dulay's surface taxonomy classification.

CONCLUSION

The analysis on the errors made by the eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri 1 Aek Natas in using simple past tense in writing narrative text. The writer

asked the students to write narrative texts as data. Based on the research, it can be concluded that misinformation is the most frequent error made by the eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri 1 Aek Natas with 82 of total errors or 54%. The second is omission with 40 of total errors or 26%. The next is misordering with 21 of total errors or 14%. The last is addition with 9 of total errors or 6%.

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