



## AN ERROR ANALYSIS OF SIMPLE PAST TENSE IN AUTOBIOGRAPHY ESSAY: CASE IN FIFTH SEMESTER OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS AT STKIP AL MAKSUM

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### Abstract

This research tells about an error analysis in autobiography essay particularly focus on simple past tense. The objective of this research is to find the types of errors and the dominant factor of the errors. This research involved the qualitative method. The participant of this research is English Department students, fifth semester at STKIP Al Maksum. There were the errors of the autobiography essay writing: omission 2 or 20%, addition 2 or 20%, misinformation 4 or 40%, and misordering 2 or 20%. The dominant factor that influences the use of the simple past tense in autobiography essay is the interference of the mother tongue or mother tongue and the minor factor is over-generalization.

**Key words:** autobiography essay, error, simple past.

### I. Introduction

Grammar is an important part of mastering English, particularly in writing. It will guide the learner to write, speak, and anything about English form well (Brown, 2000). English tenses are important to know, because the user must know how to use it at the appropriate time. Tenses will make the verb in a sentence change with time. There are several tenses in English language. There are twelve kinds of tenses. They are simple present tense, present continuous tense, present perfect tense, present perfect continuous



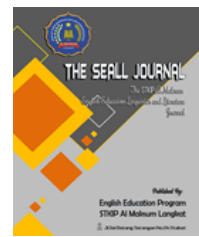
tense, past tense, past continuous tense, past perfect tense, past perfect continuous, future tense, future continuous tense, future perfect tense, future perfect continuous tense (Azar, 1999).

Writing is the expression of language in the forms of letter, symbols, or words.(Utami, 2021) Writing is one of the important skills one should learn. When the learners want to start writing, they do not only write all their ideas, but also pay attention to the grammar well. writing is very important in learning English, because the students can express their ideas and experience in writing form. Writing helps the learners expressing their ideas, arguments in the form of words in sentences. The objective of teaching writing is the students are able to write what in their thinking creatively (Raoul, 2013).

Writing skills is taught to Indonesia students' start from basic the highest level. There are five kinds of the text, such as recount, narrative, procedure, descriptive and the others. One of them is recount text. One kind of recount text is autobiographical essay which is talk about the writer's biography and experience personally. This essay is done by English education students, semester five students exactly at STKIP Al Maksum.

## **II. Literature Review**

Writing is one of the main important skills in learning English. Through the writing everyone can read the information well. It takes ideas, mind, and emotions about the text that has ever been read or seen (Ministry, 2005). Writing as nature of the composing process of writing like the story, essay, report, and what the product which should look like. But now the students as the creator of language are allowed to focus on the content and the message and their individual motivation are put at the center of learning that is process approach to writing. (Brown, 2001).



Recount text is the text that retells events or experiences in the past. Autobiography essay is one of the recount text kinds. Autobiography essay is the paper that focus on the writer's life. This text is important for university or scholarship and the others.

Grammar is very important to do writing. Good grammar will help learner to deliver feelings, message, and the ideas. grammar is systematic ways through which words and sentences are assembled to convey meaning. Usage is within the general grammar of a language, certain alternative ways of speaking and writing acquire particular social status (Leacock, 2010).

The error is natural for the learner in learning English, because English is the foreign language, especially in Indonesia. Error is a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker, reflecting the interlanguage competence of the learner (Brown, 2000). An error of essay always having the cause and effect, one of the factor from the grammatical feature.

There are four errors based on the surface strategy axonomy, such as omission, addition, misformation, and misordering (Ellis, 2005). There are some sources of errors, such as interlingual transfer, intralingual transfer, context of learning, and communication strategies (Brown, 2007).

### III. Research Method

This research involving qualitative method. Qualitative research is one of kinds of research methodology that have function to look object condition naturally with the description. The participant is the most important key in this method. In the other word, qualitative research is main participant in involves examining and reflecting on the less tangible aspects of a research subject. The participant of this research are English Department students, the fifth semester at UINSU. The research using random sampling. The purpose of the research was to find out an analysis of



the English Department students' error on using simple past tense in autobiography essay.

#### IV. Discussion

There are 10 sentences errors related to simple past tense in autobiography Essay as follows:

##### 1. Omission

- a. The students omit ending verb-ed/-d as past form.

I play volley ball with my brother. In this sentence, the verb "play" should be

"played". So the sentence should be "I played volley ball with my brother".  
(1)

- b. The students omit "to-be".

"I fine at that time" it should be "I was fine at that time". (2)

##### 2. Addition

- a. Addition of to-be

"I was and my sister cook the fish" it should be " My sister and I cooked the fish" (3)

" She is like me" it should be "she liked me" (4)

##### 3. Misinformation

- a. Incorrect sentence: I search him. (5)

Correct sentence: I was looking for him.

- b. Incorrect sentence: I was interesting. (6)

Correct sentence: I was interested.

- c. Incorrect sentence: I drinked a cup of tea. (7)



- Correct sentence: I drank a cup of tea.  
d. Incorrect sentence: I was boring (8)

Correct sentence: I was bored.

#### 4. Misordering

“The paper wrote me” it should be “The paper was written by me”  
(9)

“Me and my friends ran away” it should be “ My friends and I ran  
away” (10)

From these types of errors, there is one type of error that is often made by students, namely formation errors. The number of misordering data is 2 or 20%, misinformation is 4 or 40%, addition is 2 or 20% and then omission is 2 or 20%. The factors that influence errors in autobiographical essays, especially in the simple past tense, are taken from the results of interviews and questionnaires. They are: careless, lack of knowledge, lack of vocabulary mastery, and lack of understanding of grammar. The dominant factor that influences the use of the simple past tense in autobiography essay is the interference of the mother tongue or mother tongue and the minor factor is over-generalization.

## V. Conclusions

It can be concluded from the findings there are four kinds of error which the students did, they are: omission, addition, misinformation and misordering. In this research, misordering is 2 or 20%, misinformation is 4 or 40%, addition is 2 or 20% and then omission is 2 or 20%. The factors that influence errors in autobiographical essays, especially in the simple past tense, are taken from the results of interviews and questionnaires. They are: careless, lack of knowledge, lack of vocabulary mastery, and lack of understanding of grammar. The dominant factor that influences the use of the simple past tense in autobiography essay is the interference of the



mother tongue or mother tongue and the minor factor is over-generalization.

The students also forgot the grammar well.

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