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The Students' Grammatical Mistakes in Writing Narrative Text

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Abstract

Students made errors in writing narrative text. Two reasons why students made errors because less in grammar mastery and confuses to differentiate of the verb. This writing is to find out the grammatical errors. The method of research is descriptive quantitative. Process of data are analyzed by reading students' writing firstly, identification, classification, tabulating, describing, and taking conclusion about the errors. After analyzing the data, it found that students made errors in omission, addition, misinformation, and misordering categories. The highest frequency of item error was in using verb tense with total of 61 errors. Meanwhile, the lowest frequency of item errors were in using adverb and adjective with total of 6 errors. Total of the errors was 204.

Keywords: Grammatical Errors, Narrative Text.

I. Introduction

A Hsu (2013) states that grammatical error is a systematical deviation occurs when a learner has not fully comprehended grammar (Budiarta, D., & Widiastara, 2018). Grammatical error is an error which is not suitable to the grammatical rules that may make writing become not good (Dewanti, 2007). Meanwhile, according to Ellis stated that grammar is traditionally concerned with the principles which determined the formation and interpretation of words, phrases and sentences. Grammar is a comprehensive area of rules and relationships among those rules (Murdliyana, 2019). Grammar is very important rule that must be applied. Learners learn a set of rules and apply it effectively to use language. Students sometimes make errors on the use of grammar when they produce an English writing (Hassan, 2020). The students cannot avoid the grammatical errors in writing. Sometimes, the students do not pay attention and do not know how to correct the errors (Dewanti, 2007). Porte explains that errors tend to occur again and again until someone masters in learning the language well (Suzanne, 2017).

Grammatical errors is kind of important to be considered by the learners because it does not match with the grammatical system of a language. The English learners have to be able to understand what the grammatical rules of English and how to apply them well, especially in writing. The grammatical errors found in students' text writing sometimes will influence the meaning of the text. Therefore, learning the grammatical errors enables the students to produce a good writing. According to Brown stated that two main sources of errors in the learning of a new language are interlingual and intralingual errors (Gayo & Widodo, 2018).

Error is mistake that students have done in learning language. Generally, the error analysis is an effort to discover the students' errors in the process of teaching-learning, which students also still experience in the new language learning process. Error analysis becomes an interesting issue in studies of second language acquisition. In language teaching and learning, error analysis can be used as a technique identify, classify, and finally find the students' difficulties in learning English. It suits with Hariri which states that EA is a systematic procedure in gathering, identifying, describing, then explaining and also evaluating errors from the data then finally analyzing it (Hikmah, 2020).

There are many aspects that should be considered in writing; organization of writing, grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and diction (Donal, 2015). Harmer states that writing is a form of communication to deliver thought or to express feeling thought written form (Syahputri & Masita, 2018) and as a crucial component of language performance which can help students to develop mindset (Riana Suryanti Tambunan, Silalahi, Andayani, & Khairani Lubis, 2019).

Writing is a skill for the students to express their ideas in written form that involves the mastery of all elements in the target language (Andriani & Saniti, 2017). Bridges et al. defined writing as the phase in where a basic draft of a composition produced by the particular writer (Imaniar, 2018). Writing is the most difficult skill in learning English since it requires steps to accomplish (Hikmah, 2020). Why is writing important for students especially for University students? It because students need to process writing capability, especially relating to the written assignments given by the lecturers. If students asked to write in English, should have competency in using written English. That is why, writing is important subject to learn (Sarwono & Purwanto, 2013). Basically, narrative text is a text that has learned by students in the junior high school. Students at the college also learned it. In the time period long enough, absolutely students have been understood well. So students will not make error in writing this text. But actually, when writing class is being held, students are confused how to write the text based on generic structure well. So, students still made errors in writing the text.

Narrative is one of kind of text that must be understood by students in writing. According to Pardiyono, "Narrative is a story talk the past activities or events (Lubis, 2014) are developed chronologically (Luthfiyati & Latief, 2015) which order to problematic and to give lesson to readers." Knapp and Watkins add that formally, narrative sequences people/characters in time and space. In its most basic form, in text types such as recounting and retelling, the genre does little more than simply sequence (Reki Anggara, Wennyta, 2018).

Narrative texts could be categorized into the fictional narrative or imaginary, the non-fictional narrative, or combination of both (Fakeye & Fakeye, 2016). The function of narrative text is to amuse or entertain the reader or listener. In this text, there are some generic structures; they are: orientation, complication, resolution and coda. Narrative text deals with problematic events which led to a crisis or turning point of some kind, which in turn finds a resolution (Siahaan, 2008)

There are some kinds of narrative text; they are: legend (example: The Legend of Malin Kundang, etc), Fable (example: The Hare and The Tortoise), Fairy Tales (example: Cinderella, etc), and Science Fiction (example: The Moon and The Earth, etc). The language features of narrative text, namely: using of noun, noun phrase, connectives, adverb phrase, thinking verb (Suparmin & Rahmadi Danang, 2012), using of material verb and verbal process (Sudarwati & Grace, 2007).

II. Literature Review

The real of second language acquisition and writing skills has long been a subject of scholarly interest. Understanding the sources and types of errors made by students in writing, particularly in the context of narrative texts, is crucial for educators to tailor effective instructional strategies and curricula. This literature review examines existing research to shed light on the factors contributing to students' errors in narrative writing, specifically focusing on challenges related to grammar mastery and verb differentiation.

Errors in Second Language Writing

It is well-established that errors are an integral part of the language learning process (Ellis, 1994). Writing, being a complex linguistic skill, often becomes a platform where students' linguistic inaccuracies manifest. Research has shown that various factors contribute to these errors, such as the influence of the students' first language, incomplete grammatical competence, and challenges in applying grammatical rules in context (Corder, 1967; Dulay & Burt, 1974).

Challenges in Grammar Mastery

One significant source of errors in second language writing is the students' level of grammar mastery. Research has indicated that students may struggle with mastering the intricacies of the target language's grammar, leading to errors in tense, subject-verb agreement, articles, and other grammatical constructs (Bitchener & Knoch, 2008; Ferris, 2002). These errors can be exacerbated when students attempt to apply complex grammar rules in writing tasks, such as composing narrative texts.

Verb Differentiation Difficulties

Another recurrent challenge, closely related to grammar, is the differentiation of verb forms and tenses. Learners often encounter difficulties in distinguishing between past, present, and future tenses, as well as in using appropriate verb forms in different contexts (Han & Selinker, 1999). Verb forms, being central to conveying temporal relationships and events in narrative texts, require a nuanced understanding that many learners find challenging to acquire.

Methodology and Data Analysis

The study's methodology, a descriptive quantitative approach, aligns with previous research that examines the prevalence and distribution of errors in writing (e.g., Ferris, 2003; Ellis, 2008). By employing a systematic approach to error analysis involving identification, classification, tabulation, description, and conclusion drawing, the study aims to comprehensively capture the spectrum of errors made by students in their narrative writing.

III. Research Method

This research used descriptive quantitative approach, withtest in which the data were taken from students' writing result test. This research was done via online by using google classroom. Students asked to write a narrative text about legend. The participants of this study were students at 4th semester of English Department of STKIP Almaksum Langkat of 2019-2020 Academic Year. There are 15 students in this classroom. This study started from 29th June up to 15th August 2019. There are many steps in applying the error analysis to analyze the data that adapted from Brown (Donal, 2015), namely: read students' writing firstly, identification, classification, tabulating, describing, and taking conclusion about the errors.

IV. Result and Discussion

Based on instrument of the test, students asked to write a narrative text about legend. There are 15 students who answered the test. After finishing the test, students sent the test in file form to google classroom. The detail description of result the test described below:

1. Students made error in surface strategy taxonomy category.
2. Kinds of error made by students were in omission (63 errors), addition (62 errors), misformation (56 errors), and misordering (23 errors) categories.
3. The dominant error made by students was in omission category with the percentage 30.9 % (see on table 1 below).

Table 1
Percentage of Dominant Errors Made by Students

No	Surface Strategy Taxonomy	Percentage
1	Omission	30.9 %
2	Addition	30.4 %
3	Misformation	27.4 %
4	Misordering	11.3 %
Total		100 %

Based on grammatical error, there are some item errors made by students; they are: conjunction, article, singular/plural, to be, verb tense, adverb & adjective, demonstrative adjective, pronoun and preposition (see on table 2 below)

Table 2
Classification of Students' Grammatical Error

No	Item Errors	Frequency of Error
1	Conjunction	25
2	Article	35
3	Singular/Plural	11

4	To be	26
5	Verb Tense	61
6	Adverb & Adjective	6
7	Demonstrative Adjective	11
8	Pronoun	19
9	Preposition	10
Total		204

Based on figure 1 below, there are 9 grammatical items found on students' error in writing narrative text. But there are five item errors often appears on students' grammatical; they are: verb tense (61 errors), article (35 errors), to be (26 errors), conjunction (25 errors), and pronoun (19 errors)

V. Conclusions

From surface strategy taxonomy, the kinds of error made by students were in omission (63 errors), addition (62 errors), misformation (56 errors), and misordering (23 errors) categories. The dominant error made by students was in omission category with the percentage 30.9%. There are 9 grammatical items found on students' error in writing narrative text. But there are five item errors often appears on students' grammatical; they are: verb tense (61 errors), article (35 errors), to be (26 errors), conjunction (25 errors), and pronoun (19 errors). The highest frequency of item errors made by students in writing narrative text was in using verb tense with total of 61 errors. Meanwhile, the lowest frequency of item errors was in using adverb and adjective with total of 6 errors. Total of the errors was 204.

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