

STUDENTS' ERRORS ON USING SIMPLE PAST TENSE IN TRANSLATING NARRATIVE TEXT FROM INDONESIAN TO ENGLISH

(A qualitative research in X.5 Students of SMAN 1 KEDUNGWUNI)

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Abstract

English grammar is still something difficult to be mastered. Indonesia has now abandoned the 2013 curriculum and switched to using the “Merdeka Belajar” Curriculum as a reference for formal education. In this sense, English subjects have seen a reduction in lesson time to 2 hours per week, while the need for English teaching is very necessary for students, especially in terms of understanding grammar and vocabulary. Several students gain struggles in writing using simple past tense. In this case, quite hard for Indonesian students to use the simple past properly. So as to solve the problem in students' errors, the researchers did the analysis about the errors, with the purpose of students be able to understand and know their struggles on usage of simple past tense. The qualitative method is used by researchers in conducting the research. The data came from 34 narrative texts written by students X.5 of SMAN 1 KEDUNGWUNI on May, 3rd 2023. The students were required to translate narrative text from Indonesian to English. The findings show that students made 741 errors in total. Those errors are categorized into four types namely omission (17.4%), addition (15%), misformation (64%), and misordering (3.6 %). As the most dominant errors have been discovered, students and teachers should pay attention to minimize their occurrence.

Keywords: Error analysis, Simple Past Tense, English Grammar

INTRODUCTION

The Indonesian government has recognized the importance of English and now formal education are decisive to determine the English become a compulsory subject. So English is taught from elementary school to university. One of the most necessary language in the world is English. Therefore English is used as a language for communication and is even used in several fields, such as: education, economics, and work. Learning English is different from learning Indonesian language. In Indonesia, English is importance as a second language, meanwhile the students need to master four skills, such as listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Tenses are necessary component in the English as each incident and action is expressed in sentences based on when (time) it occurs. Verb changes in sentences

can be determined when an event or action occurs, it is called tenses. English language has several various type and each of them is different. The variances appear in the form of the verbs used and the effective time of the verbs.

Azar (1999) state that grammar has twelve types of tense: (a) future perfect continuous, (b) future perfect, (c) future continuous, (d) future, (e) past perfect continuous, (f) past perfect, (g) past continuous, (h) simple past, (i) present perfect continuous, (j) present perfect, (k) present continuous, (l) simple present. The purpose of the tense are they designate the happening of an action, state the sentence, and whether about the incident or action is progressing or not. Fadzilyna (2013) state that different tense have different purpose. Past tense is to describe about event or action that occur in the past and no longer in the present.

According to Lyons (1996: 54), grammar is one of the primary problems that students face when learning English. While learning the English language, the students will encounter some difficulties that lead to mistakes in the use of the English language. Ellis (1997:17) says that error is different from mistake. The error describes a lack of student knowledge. This happens because the disciples do not know the truth. Although the mistake, describes a oneoff action error, it occurs because the learner cannot test their knowledge. In high school, English is a compulsory subject in all majors. Grammar is an important part of learning English, as well as writing. Grammar should always be considered when writing an essay. Tarigan (2008:3-4) shows that writing is a language skill used to communicate indirectly, and writing is a productive and expressive activity.

Writing is one of the skills that students find difficult. For example, when students are requested to form a short sentence based on the given words or to rearrange sentences, they make error because they lack vocabulary and do not comprehend the grammar. English learners can make many errors when writing, such as in tenses or ordered sentence that make a good paragraph. Students as beginners in learning English often produce errors when writing as a learning process. There are a few kinds of text in English, one of them is narrative text. There are several text that use simple past tense and one of them is narrative. Cahyono (1997) states that narration generally refers to the telling of a story. Students should pay attention to past tense as it is written in past tense verbs when writing a narrative text. Because of in writing a

narrative text , the simple past tense becomes a necessary element.

According to Douglas cited by Aminah (2016), when learning a language, we need to understand the grammar rules to form accurate sentences. Grammar should be consistently introduced to students, especially beginners, since teaching

grammar and vocabulary has always been a central aspect of developing foreign language teaching structures.

Unfortunately in Indonesia, the students still have struggles in mastered grammar even though they have learned English since Junior High School. Indonesia has now abandoned the 2013 curriculum and switched to using the curriculum of *Merdeka Belajar* as a reference for formal education. In this sense, English subjects have seen a reduction in lesson time to 2 hours per week, while the need for English teaching is very necessary for students, especially in terms of understanding grammar and vocabulary. It is feared that this reduction in hours will affect students' understanding. Students in Indonesia still get difficulties in usage of simple past tense correctly. With the aim of clear up the problem about students' error, the researchers measured to analyze the errors, in order that students able to discover and know their struggle on usage of past tense. Thus, the students will not do the same errors continually. According the reason above, the researchers were attracted in conducting a research entitled "Students' Errors on Using Simple Past Tense In Translating Narrative Text from Indonesia to English".

RESEARCH METHOD

Descriptive qualitative research method was used for this research. Qualitative research needs some generally recognized common procedure. According to Arikunto (2010: 3),

"descriptive research is a study has purpose to investigate condition and the result will be explained in report form". It means that the descriptive research is a research that is based on the certain condition and the result of the data is presented by report structure. In this research, the researchers chose descriptive qualitative research because the researchers would like to find out about the type of students' errors on using simple past tense

in translating narrative text from Indonesian into English.

Fraenkel and Wallen (1993: 368) stated that “research studies that investigate the quality of relationships, activities, situation or material are frequently referred as a descriptive qualitative”. It can be understood that descriptive qualitative is a research that is conducted to know about quality or condition of subject of the research. In addition, the presentation of the data explained by descriptive report not number. Therefore, the research method used by the researchers in collecting and analyzing data was descriptive qualitative. Further, the researcher presented by describing the data about students’ errors in using simple past tense also result of the research.

The researchers mainly focused in the “Students’ errors on using simple past tense in translating narrative text from Indonesia to English”, especially for the X.5 students of SMAN 1 Kedungwuni, Pekalongan.

Research instrument is the research tool which is used by a researcher for collecting data (Arikunto, 2006 : 149). In collecting data, the researchers use a test as the research instrument. The test was the instrument to measure the students’ progress in every step during the research. According to Arikunto (2006 : 150) A test is any set of exercises or other methods of evaluating a person's abilities, knowledge, IQ, or other traits. The translation test was the test that the researcher used in this research. In this case, the researcher gave the students a narrative text in Indonesian language. Students were asked to translate narrative text into English correctly along with the use of the simple past tense.

The researchers gave a sheet of paper for each student which contained narrative text in Indonesian language with the intention of to analyze the errors made by students’ on using simple past tense in translating narrative text from Indonesia to English,. They were asked to translate the text into English language so as to be used as meter of their understanding in usage of

simple past tense in narrative text. The researcher gave the explanation and direction before their do the task and told them what the students should do with the task. The task was used to get data about the errors made by the students on using simple past tense in translating narrative text.

For this case, the researcher used error analysis for analyze the errors made by the students’ on using simple past tense in translating narrative text. The stages used to analyze the data were as follows:

a. Collection of Sample

All of X.5 students of SMAN 1 Kedungwuni as the sample of data for the researchers. They were given translating text so as to get the data.

b. Identification of Errors

The researchers then recognized the errors. The researchers began to read one by one the narrative text written by the students and try to recognize the errors on the usage of simple past tense made by the students specifically in usage of to be (was, were) and past verb (regular, irregular verb), also the vocabulary.

c. Description of Errors

Next, the researchers highlight the error items and classify the errors into the types of errors based on surface strategy taxonomy, they are omission, addition, misformation, and misordering.

d. Explanation of Errors:

The researchers described about students’ error in using simple past tense. In analyzing, the researchers used formula by Sudjana (1997: 4):

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

Where:

P = percentage of the error

F = frequency of the error

N= total sample

FINDING(S) AND DISCUSSION

The result of the research is useful to discover the error on using simple past tense in translating narrative text from

Indonesian to English. The research had been conducted on Wednesday, 03 May 2023. The data was obtained from the result of the test. The test was given to students which were the X.5 grade students of SMAN 1 Kedungwuni which consisted of 36 students. However, there were 2 students who did not attend the class.

The result of the study was taken from the students' test of their mastery in usage of simple past tense in translating narrative text from Indonesian to English. This test was also to measure students' ability in English, especially in terms of writing. It was found that there were several errors in students' composition. The errors were classified into 4 types : omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. In this step, the researchers identified students' errors on using simple past tense in translating narrative text from Indonesian to English.

Furthermore, the researchers divided the students' errors into four types. They were omission, addition, misformation, and misordering.

There are some examples of errors on using simple past tense in translating narrative text from Indonesian to English made by students of X.5 at SMAN 1 Kedungwuni, Pekalongan.

1. Omission

- a. They haven't children

In this sentence, students made incomplete sentences by eliminating important words in the sentence. The correct sentence should be " They didn't have children ".

- b. He cries and wrapped in a blanked

In this sentence, students made incomplete sentences by eliminating important words in the sentence. The correct sentence should be " He cried and was wrapped in a blanket ".

- c. Xiao Lee was eating at a restaurant several miles away from Taipei.

In this sentence, students made incomplete sentences by eliminating important words in the sentence. The

correct sentence should be " Xiao Lee was eating at a restaurant that was several miles away from Taipei.

2. Addition

- a. " You should send your son away " **that was** he said.

In this sentence, student presented an item which must not appear in a wellformed utterance. The correct sentence should be " " You should send your son away " He said ".

- b. When Xiao Lee was **still** young.

In this sentence, student presented an item which must not appear in a wellformed utterance. The correct sentence should be " When Xiao Lee was young ".

- c. Then he realized that someone **had** accidentally taken his bag and left another bag **behind**.

In this sentence, student presented an item which must not appear in a wellformed utterance. The correct sentence should be " The he realized that someone accidentally took his bag and left another bag ".

3. Misformation

- a. There live a man

In this sentence, students made a wrong sentence because they used Verb I instead using Verb II because this is narrative text. The correct sentence should be " There lived a man ".

- b. They borrow that baby into their house

In this sentence, students made a wrong sentence because they used Verb I instead using Verb II because this is narrative text. The correct sentence should be " They brought that baby into their house ".

- c. They believe in what fortune teller said

In this sentence, students made a wrong sentence because they used Verb I instead using Verb II because this is narrative text. The correct

sentence should be “ They believed in what fortune teller said “.

d. Xiao Lee returns to Taipei

In this sentence, students made a wrong sentence because they used Verb I instead using Verb II because this is narrative text. The correct sentence should be “ Xiao Lee returned to Taipei “.

4. Misordering

a. Xiao Lee told them what had happened

In this sentence, students made incorrect placement of morpheme or a group of morphemes in the utterance. The correct sentence should be “ Xiao Lee told what happened to them “

b. The young man’s father was a merchant very rich

In this sentence, students made incorrect placement of morpheme or a group of morphemes in the utterance. The correct sentence should be “ The young man’s father was a very rich merchant “

Based on the results of data analysis, researchers obtained data results, including:

Types of Errors	Quantity	Percentage
Omission	129	17.3 %
Addition	114	15.3 %
Misformation	476	63.8 %
Misordering	27	3,6 %
TOTAL	746	100%

CONCLUSION

Based on analyses about the errors made by the students the researchers tried to draw the conclusion. Simple past tense designates that an activity or situation ended at a particular time in the past. In this research, there were many simple past tense errors made by the students in translating narrative text from Indonesian into English. After analyzed the narrative text written by

students, the researchers found 741 errors in using simple past tense. Those errors consisted of omission (17.4 %), addition (15%), misformation (64%), and misordering (3.6 %). The most frequently made error was misformation.

Based on the result above, the English teacher should pay attention of simple past tense lesson and teach students how to minimize the errors in translating text from Indonesia into English. Students should also pay attention to those errors and try not to repeat the same errors in their writings. More practices in using simple past tense may also be given to familiarize the students with simple past tense.

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