

AN ERROR ANALYSIS IN USING SIMPLE PAST TENSE OF NARRATIVE TEXT IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract

The objective of the research was to find out the kinds of error in using simple past tense of narrative text and dominant error made by the first grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Buntulia. This research employed descriptive research. The population of the research was the first grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Buntulia. The sample consisted of 20 students taken from each class in Academic Year 2023/2024. The data were collected through the students' written test of narrative. The result of the research showed that there were 374 total error that the students made which were classified into four categories based on surface strategy taxonomy (SST). The error of omission was 90 errors, the error of addition was 48 errors, the errors of misformation was 231 errors and the errors of misordering was 5 errors. The dominant error of the students were in misformation category. It can be seen from the percentage of the result where misformation were 62%, then followed by the error of omission with 24%, the error of addition with 13%, and the error of misordering with 1%. Based on the result of the research, it can be concluded that the first grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Buntulia had many errors in writing narrative text especially in using simple past tense. The students need more practice in using simple past tense in order to make them familiar with it and they can arrange a good narrative text.

Keywords: *Error Analysis, Simple Past Tense, Narrative Text, Students.*

Introduction

Applying the compatible teaching method plays a significant role in teaching and learning process including teaching grammar or tenses. Tenses are the most important element in English language because every event and action is expressed in sentence according to the time of occurrence. Tenses are *when* an event or action takes place and that can be determined through the verb change in the sentence. Edward in Pensius *et al.* (2016), tense is a form of verb that shows the time of an action or condition. In the other word, tenses mean a form of a time.

There are several arguments why grammar is important for the students to master. According to Apsari (2018, p. 52). Grammar consists of rules for arranging words by combining them into sentences. To write read, speak, and listen well in English, students must know the grammar skills. Cam et al, (2017, p. 55) Grammar is indispensable for learning English. Students must be able to master it as well as other people to make it easier to use in communicating. While. Azar (1999, p. 51) grammar or tense is a set of structural rules that govern the composition of sentences, phrases, and words in

particular natural language. Furthermore Azar (1999), there are twelve kinds of tenses. They are (a) simple present tense, (b) present continuous tense, (c) present perfect tense, (d) present perfect continuous tense, (e) past tense, (f) past continuous tense, (g) past perfect tense, (h) past perfect continuous, (i) future tense, (j) future continuous tense, (k) future perfect tense, (l) future perfect continuous tense. Tenses refer to different forms of a verb or verb phrase. We use different tenses to talk or to write about different times.

Grammar or Tenses have fundemantal functions in sentences. they are (a) shows the occurrence of an action, whether in the present, in the past or in the future, (b) indicates the state of the sentence, whether in perfect or imperfect form, (c) indicates whether the event or action is progressing or not. Ancker in Fadzilyna (2013). Every kind of tenses has their own function and not only take place in the present, but also in the past and future. In line with these, it can be concluded that tenses is one of the fundamental and basic grammatical in language that the students need to master. In order that, they can arrange paragraph properly.

Review of Literature

Concept of Error

Definition of Error

Error is a part of learning process. Ancker in Fadzilyna (2013), making mistakes or errors is a natural process of learning and must be considered as part of cognition. People cannot learn language without first systematically committing errors. Error arises “only when there was no intention to commit one”. Errors caused by the lack of knowledge about the language rules. Errors come from the learners’ competence in learning language. Thus, errors result from incomplete learning and knowledge of learners about target language system.

A. Types of Error

Dulay *et al.* (1982) errors are classified into four types based on the surface strategy taxonomy. This taxonomy classified into four types, they are:

1. Omission

Omission errors are characterized by the absence of an item that must appear in a well-formed utterance. Learners make an incomplete sentence by omitting any morphemes. Dulay (1982: 150), omission has two types of

morphemes that are omitted more than others, they are content morphemes and grammatical morphemes. Content morphemes are morphemes that have meaning like nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs. Grammatical morphemes are little words that have minor play in sentences like noun and verb inflections, articles, auxiliaries, and preposition. The grammatical morphemes much more frequently omitted than content morphemes.

2. Addition

Addition is the opposite of omission. It is characterized by the presence of an item which must not appear in a well-formed utterance. There are three types of addition, they are

- 1) Double marking, two items rather than one are marked for the same feature. For example: He *didn’t went to school yesterday*.
- 2) Regularizations, a marker that is typically added to a linguistic item is erroneously added to exceptional items of the given class that do not take a marker. For example: *mouses* and *readed* are both regularizations in which the regular plural and past tense markers *-s* and *-ed* respectively,

have been added to items which do not take marker.

- 3) Simple addition, if an addition error is not a double marking or regularization, it is called a simple addition. For example: *A my friend visited my house yesterday.*

3. Misformation

Misformation is characterized by the use of the wrong form of the morpheme or the structure.

For example:

Once upon a time, there *are* two best friends.

It should be: Once upon a time, there *were* two best friends.

4. Misordering

Misordering errors are characterized by the incorrect placement of morpheme or a group of morphemes in the utterance. Learners might ignore. The correct structure of each sentence used in the target language.

For example: She *yesterday* went to Japan for holiday.

Thus, it can be said that the incorrect position for adverb of time made by learner in the target language the same as they did in the first language.

B. Sources of Error

Ratnah (2013: 161) there are two sources of error; interlingual and intralingual transfer. Brown (2000: 223) added context of learning and communication strategies as the sources of errors in second language acquisition.

a. Interlingual Transfer

Interlingual transfer is a significant source for language learners. It is the error which is caused by the learner's first language. This should not be confused with behaviouristic approach of language transfer. Error analysis does not regard them as the persistence of old habits, but rather as signs that the learner is internalizing and investigating the system of the new language. Interlingual errors may occur at different levels such as transfer of phonological, morphological, grammatical and lexicosemantic elements of the native language into the target language (Fatmawati & Sholikin, 2019).

b. Intralingual Transfer

Intralingual errors result from faulty of partial learning of target language rather

than language transfer. They may be caused the influence of one target language item upon another. For example, learners attempt to use two tense markers at the same time in one sentence since they have not mastered the language yet.

When they say: “He *is comes* yet.”

It is because the singularity of the third person requires “is” in present continuous, and “-s” at the end of verb in simple present tense. In short, intralingual errors occur as a result of learners’ attempt to build up concepts and hypotheses about the target language from their limited experience with it.

c. Context of Learning

Brown (2000: 226), the third major source of error although it overlaps both types of transfer is the context of learning. “Context” refers, for example, to the classroom with its teacher and its materials in the case of school learning or the social situation and untutored second language. In classroom context the teacher or the textbook can lead the learner to make faulty hypotheses about the language, what Richards (in Brown, 2000: 226) called “false concepts”. Students make errors because of misleading explanation from the teacher,

faulty presentation of a structure or word in a textbook, or even because of a pattern that was memorized in a drill but improperly contextualized.

d. Communication Strategies

Communication strategies was defined and related to learning style. Learners obviously use production strategies in order to enhance getting their message across, but at times these techniques can themselves become a source of error (Brown, 2000: 227).

C. Error Analysis

Richard *et al.* (1992), the study of errors are used in order to (1) identify strategies which learners use in language teaching, (2) identify the causes of learners’ errors, and (3) obtain information on common difficulties in language learning as an aid to teaching or in development of teaching materials.

2.2 Concept of Simple Past Tense

2.2.1 Definition of Simple Past Tense

Azar (1982), simple past tense is an event that occurred in the past that has been completed. An event that happened in the past may be a repetitive action or a habit. It is also a picture of an event that was done and completed in the past (e.g. *I went to the office yesterday, I celebrated my sister's party last year, and*

I visited my sister's house in London). Past simple replace definite time, this means to explain events that have been completed before the statement. This is expressed by yesterday, two months ago, last week, etc (Fatmawati & Sholikin, 2020).

2.2.2 The Use of Simple Past Tense

Walker (2000), the use of the simple past tense is divided into three. First, complete action describes an event that happened in the past and has been completed. Second simple past tense shows an event that contains an estimated time that has started and has been experienced (Fatmawati et al., 2020). Third it could be the past that has just been experienced. Furthermore, Simple past tense is a time that describes a situation that occurred at a certain time in the past and has several uses.

2.2.3 The Pattern of Simple Past Tense

The pattern of the simple past tense are divided into three parts, affirmative negative, and interrogative (Broukal & Wisniewska, 2005).

1) Affirmative or Positive

a. The Verb other than be

The regular verbs were added (-ed) for the ending in the simple past sentence. This form is used for all subjects, both singular and plural. The

Pattern the verb other than be (**S + V2 + Compliment**). For example, *she cooked five minutes ago, he touched a dirty glass*. Based on the example, in regular verbs a positive sentence is added (-ed) at the end of the word. It can be seen from the example above, the word “cooked” is V2 which has added (-ed) from the basic word “cook”.

b. The Verb of Be

In the verb of be sentence, the pattern is (**S + was/were + Compliment**). For example, *we were at the bookstore yesterday, she was angry yesterday*. The use of *was* is used for the pronouns **I, she, he, it** (*I was in the book store last week*). However, the verb of be **were** is used for pronouns **we, you, they** (The verb of be *was* for the singular noun and the use of *were* for the plural noun).

2) Negative

a. The Verb Other than Be

The negative form of regular and irregular verbs added did not (didn't) and the infinitive. In the negative sentence verb other than be, the pattern is (**S + did + not + Verb 1 + Compliment**). For example, *she didn't buy a book, Rani and Toni didn't play football last night*. Based on the example, the use of V2 is not used in the negative

form but uses V1 and before the main verb is added did not (didn't).

b. Verb of Be

In the verb of be negative sentence, the pattern is **(subject + was/were + not + Compliment)**. The use of "was not/were not" in negative sentences was added after the subject. For example, He wasn't angry, she wasn't playing football last night.

3) Interrogative

The interrogative of regular and irregular verbs added did + subject + infinitive, Yes or no question.

a. The positive verb other than be.

Interrogative use the pattern **Did + S (subject) + Verb 1 + Compliment**. For example, did she buy a book?. The use of "did" is used in front of the sentence before the subject.

b. The negative verb other than be

In the negative verb other than be sentence, the pattern is **(Did + not+ S (subject) + Verb 1 + Complement)**. For example, didn't Rudi and Jason play badminton last week?. Based on the example, the use of "didn't" in interrogative negative sentences

is at the beginning of the sentence and the subject is added after it.

c. The positive verb of be

In the positive verb of be sentence, the pattern is **(Was/Were + S (subject) + Complement)**. For example, was she angry yesterday?. Based on the example, the use of "was/were" in interrogative positive sentences is at the beginning of the sentence and the subject is added after it.

d. The negative verb of be

In the negative verb of be sentence, the Pattern is **(Wasn't/weren't+ S (subject) + Complement)**. For example, wasn't she angry?. Based on the example, the use of "wasn't/weren't" in interrogative negative sentences is at the beginning of the sentence and the subject is added after it.

1. Research Design

The method of the research was qualitative method. Creswell (2012), qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting. In this research, the writer aimed to find out the

errors and the dominant error made by the first grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Buntulia in using simple past tense of narrative text.

2. Findings

1. Kinds of Error on The Use of Simple Past Tense

The researcher analyzed the data, identified and underlined the error items. The students' writing was identified and classified based on kinds of errors according to Dullay *et al* (1982).

The result of the students' narrative text by using Simple Past Tense can be seen in the table 4.1

Table 4.1 Kinds of Error Made by the Students in Narrative Text

No.	Kinds of Error	Number of Error
1	Error of Omission	90
2	Error of Addition	48
3	Error of Misformation	231
4	Error of Misordeing	5
	Total	374

Based on the data of the table 4.1, 374 errors were found by the researcher. They were 90 errors of omission, 48 errors of addition, 231 errors of misformation and 5 errors of misordering.

2. The Dominant Error on the Use of Simple Past Tense

Table 4.2 The Percentage of the Students' Error

No.	Kinds of Error	Percentage
1	Error of Omission	24%
2	Error of Addition	13%
3	Error of Misformation	62%
4	Error of Misordeing	1%
	Total	100%

Table 4.2 pointed out the percentage of error made by the students in narrative text. The highest number of error was error of misformation with the total of errors 62%. The first below of the highest number was error of omission with the total of errors 24%. The second below of the highest number was error of addition with the total of errors 13%. Then, the lowest number of error was

error of misordering with the total of errors 1%.

4.2 Percentage of Students' Error

Based on the table 4.2, the highest number of error is Misformation with the percentage 62%. Omission with the total errors 24%. Addition with 13% of errors. The last, Misordering with 1% of total errors. Thus, it can be concluded that misformation was the dominant error on the use of simple past tense in narrative text made by the first grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Buntulia.

Discussion

1) The kinds of Error on the Use of Simple Past Tense

The researcher found various errors made by the first grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Buntulia. The errors related to the Dulay's theory. Those were Omission, Addition, Misformation and Misordering.

a. Omission

The students made errors by omitting some words and made an incomplete sentence in their narrative writing. There were 90 (24%) errors of omission made by students; those were (1) omission of verbs, (2) omission of to be, (3) regular past marker of *-ed*, (4) omission of be, (5) omission of letter of

verbs. The students mostly omitted regular past marker of *-ed*.

- The ant ***climb*** on the leaf. It should be the ant ***climbed*** on the leaf.

b. Addition

Addition, when the students produced an item which must not appear in a well-formed utterance. The students made error by adding some elements in one or several parts in the sentence which must not appear. There were 48 (13%) error of addition made by the students which were (1) addition of suffix "s" in past sentence which were considered as Regularizations addition, (2) addition of to be in verbal sentence, (3) addition of verbs; these three types considered as double marking addition, (4) addition of to, (6) addition letter of verbs; both these types considered as Simple addition. The students mostly made addition of double marking.

- The ant quickly ***is bit*** him. It should be "The ant quickly ***bit*** him.

The students marked two items (verbs) as past form where students only needs the word "bit" as the mark of simple past tense.

c. Misformation

The students made errors by using inappropriate grammar in one or several parts of a sentence. There were 231 (62%) error of misformation made by the students which were:

- 1) To be: using to be in present from for past sentence, wrong form of to be, using to be in verbal sentence.
- 2) Verbs: Regular past verbs and Irregular verbs.
- 3) Modals: using modals in present form for past tense, verb 2 after modals
 - She **come** to a spring. It should be 'She **came** to a spring.
 - She **can** have **drown**. It should be "She **could** have **drowned**.

The students used infinitive verb where the verb should be in past tense. It is because mostly students did not know the substitute of regular verb into past tense.

d. Misordering

Misordering, when the students made incorrect placement of morpheme or a group of morphemes in the utterance. The sentence can be right in presented elements, but wrongly in sequence. There were 5 (1%) error of misordering found in students' narrative text which considered as misordering of Verb-Object.

- The dove **safety** quick to **flying** away. It should be "The dove **was** quick **to fly to safety**.
- It **carry her to ground** to **dry safely**. It should be "It **carried her safely** to **dry ground**.
- And **drop** into the **near water** the **ant struggle**. It should be "and **dropped** into the **water near** the **struggling ant**.

2) The Dominant Error on the use of Simple Past Tense

The researcher calculated the percentage from each kind of errors which found in the students' narrative text. Based on the percentage of kinds of errors, the dominant error on the use of simple past tense in narrative text was the error of misformation. They mostly made errors in the misformation of irregular verbs in simple past tense. Moreover, the result of findings and discussion indicated that mostly students have difficulties in using simple past tense especially the past form of verb and to be. Students should use verb two in using narrative text but they didn't. For example, "An ant is searching for some watering". Mostly students wrote to be in the present form rather than in past form. It indicates that students didn't know how to use simple past tense and didn't

understand well the rules of simple past tense.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the students' writing narrative test, the dominant error made by the students is error of misformation with the total errors 231 or 62%. This error became the most difficult for students because they didn't understand the substitution of verb and to be from infinitive into past tense. The second is omission with the total errors 90 or 24%. The third is error of addition with 48 or 13%. The last is error of misordering with 5 errors or 1%. Students made such error because they didn't know well the way in using simple past tense. Refers to the conditions above, the researcher concludes that tenses or grammar as a compulsory subject must be taught by the teacher in depth. In order the students can write a good text, including writing narrative text.

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