Grammatical Errors of English Descriptive Texts Written by Sixth Grade Students of Multi-Q Elementary School

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Abstract

The entitled of this study is "Grammatical Errors of English Descriptive Texts Written by Sixth Grade Students of Multi-Q Elementary School". This study aims at finding and describing the types of error found in students' descriptive texts. Descriptive text is one type of texts in writing that is usually used in the level of elementary school especially in sixth grade. To make a good written text, the students must be able to master and apply the structure correctly. But in fact, many students still face difficulties when they make English composition and cause grammatical errors in their writing. The theory used in this study is from Dulay about types of error. The data were analyzed qualitatively. The method that used in this research is observation method. The technique used to collect the data are divided into: asking permission to the headmaster of Multi-Q Elementary School, giving blank paper to the students to make descriptive text with a free topic, and collecting the texts are made by the students. The process of data analyzing were: the errors were found by reading every sentence carefully, find out the errors and classifying them according to the types of error. In this research, there are four types of errors namely: omission, addition, misformation, and misordering.

Keywords: Grammatical Error, Writing, Descriptive Texts

1. Introduction

English has become a universal language which is as the most important means of communication both oral and written. Therefore, English has been given a priority to be learnt because by mastering English it will give us many advantages. English is also used in various aspects and fields. One of them is education field. In Indonesia, English has developed rapidly and already taught to young learner at pre-school until university level. As the formal education, school, college, or university are the places where the students can improve their ability and knowledge because those places provide the curriculum and teacher or lecturer that can lead them to achieve the goals of their lives. In order to be able to communicate with English language, the learners have to concern with many rules, such as pronunciation, structure, vocabulary and etc.

Currently, in Indonesia there are many schools that applied new system in their school for facing the globalization especially in English language teaching. One of the systems in some schools is how to master English well by creating English program such as the English extracurricular or interesting method. At the recent time all the schools in Indonesia have to apply 2013 curriculum where the students are required to master four skills which are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. That curriculum can answer the global

challenges faced by all of level society. Therefore, by using 2013 curriculum it can create the graduation who reliable and students have a high competitive to face the global change.

According to Khasanah (2015:5) in the implementation of 2013 curriculum, there are three related dimensions which cannot be separated. They are planning, teaching learning process, and learning evaluation. The planning will establish the materials that will be taught, the media will be chosen, and the methods will be used in teaching learning process. In such away, the evaluation procedures will be used to know the product of teaching learning process and students' achievement. Therefore, in other word the teacher just become facilitator for students and give attention in every students' skill.

In this study, the researchers focus to do the research about the error analysis of students' descriptive text and this study is related with writing skill. Descriptive text is one type of texts in writing that is usually used in the level of junior high school especially in seventh grade. Then, writing skill is one of the four basic skills in English and it is very important. Richard and Renandya (2002:303) state that writing is the most difficult skill for second language and foreign language learner. Furthermore, they claim that writing is not only generating and organizing ideas of our mind, but also translating these idea into a readable text. It means that ability to write needs a special skill and process in organizing language material by using learners' own words and ideas and to be written in a good composition.

Based on the pre-observation with the English teacher of Multi-Q elementary school, it was found that the students of sixth grade students are failed to get a good mark and to fulfill the requirement in passing grade score especially in writing. The students commonly have difficulties and feel bored in writing because it spends many times to express their ideas into a readable text. This condition makes some students get some problems and difficulties in writing.

According to Dulay (1982:138) in the performance of learning, learners cannot learn without committing the errors. In learning English, the errors that made by the students may be caused by the incompleteness of the students' knowledge. Besides that, the curriculum which requires students to solve their own problems while the teachers mostly serve as an advisor, makes the students get some difficulties. Perhaps it is also because of the influence of their mother tongue that affect their writing skill and cannot avoid the errors.

To make a good written text, the students must be able to master and apply the structure correctly. But in fact, many students still face difficulties when they make English composition for example I was go to the market with I mother yesterday. Automatically their writing will cause misunderstanding for the readers, because the readers cannot receive the massage or expression of their idea well. Most of the students still find problems in using it, because of their limited mastery. Considering to the problem above, it is intended to do the research to analyze the errors made by the students with the tittle "Grammatical Errors of English Descriptive Texts Written by Sixth Grade Students of Multi-Q Elementary School"

2. Theoretical Framework

This study used the theories from Dulay (1982) in his book entitled *Language Two* to answer the first problem about types of error.Learning English as second language acquisition makes some students often commit errors. Dulay states that there are four types of errors, namely, omission, addition, misformation, and misordering.

2.1. Omission

Omission errors is a type of error which occurs if there are one or more items that do not appear in a well-formed of utterances. Any morpheme or word which does not appear like it should be can be categorized as omission grammatical morphemes are more frequent to be omitted by learners rather than the content words. The examples as follow:

"'Our dog chasing your cat"

In English structure, the sentence above is categorized as the present continuous tense which is formed with the present tense of auxiliary verb to be + the present participle (the infinitive + ing). From the sentence above, the learners omit copula be that should be added before the verb-ing to make the correct structure in making sentence. Therefore the correct sentence is "Our dog **is** chasing your cat"

2.2 Addition

In contrast with omission. If omission error is the error which occurs if there are one or more items that do not appear in a well-formed of utterances while addition errors are defined by the presence of an item which must not appear in a well-formed utterance'. Addition errors usually occur in the later stages of L2 acquisition, when the learner has already acquired some target language rules there are three types of addition errors as good indicators that some basic rules have been acquired:

a. Double Markings

This kind of errors show the failure to delete certain items which are required in some linguistic construction, but not in others. For example:

"He <u>does</u> not <u>knows</u> my name"

In sentence above, there are two items marked for the same features that are in the auxiliary and the verb. The correct sentence is "He does not know my name"

b. Regularization

A rule typically applies to a class of linguistics items, such as the class of main verbs or the class of noun for example, the verb eat does not become eated, but eaten. The noun sheep is also sheep in plural, not sheeps. The learners usually apply the rule that is used to produce the regular ones to those that are irregular. This kind of error a results in regularization error.

Regularization errors that fall under the addition category are those in which 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.

c. Simple Addition

Simple addition error are the "grab bag" subcategory of additions. If an addition error is not double marking or regularization, it is called simple addition. No particular features characterize simple addition other than those that characteristic all addition errors or the use of an item which should not appear in a well-formed utterance. Simple addition error observed in both L1 and L2 child speech include those listed. For example:

"In over there, I get some exercises"

The sentence above show the wrong insertion of preposition. The correct sentence is "I get some exercises over there"

2.3. Misformation

Misformation errors are characterized by the use of the wrong form of morphemes or structure. One of the examples is characterized by the use of wrong placement of an article or morphemes. The learners usually supplies something, although it is incorrect. For the examples:

"The dog eated the chicken"

A past tense marker in that sentence was supply by the learners that is not the right ones. Misformation errors can be typical zed into regularization, archi-form and alterning form. Misformation

indicates that some learning has transpired and that barring certain attitude or environmental circumstances, the learner is on his or her way to target language proficiency.

a. Regularizations

Regularization errors that fall under the misformation category are those in which a regular marker is used in place of an irregular one. For example:

Table 1. Regularization

Linguistic item misformed	Example	Correction
Reflexive Pronoun Regular Past Plural	His self I Falled Gooses	Himself I Fell Geese

All those sentences above show the over regularization in the verbal production of child L2 learners.

b. Archi-forms

Archi-forms are the use of one member of class of terms to represent others in the class. The selection of one member of a one member of a class forms to represent others in the class is a common characteristic of all stages of second language acquisition. These selected forms are called archi-forms, for example : a learner may temporarily select just one of the English demonstrative adjectives: this, that, these, and those, to do work for several of them. For example:
"That dog"
"That dogs"
For this learner, those sentences are the archi demonstrative adjective representing the entire class of demonstrative adjective.

c. Alternating Forms

Alternating Form is the used of the members of one grammatical class for each other. For example in the case of pronoun:
Masculine for feminine (or vice versa)   : he for she
Plural for singular (or vice versa)   : they for it
Accusative for nominative case (or vice versa)   : her for she

2.4. Misordering

Misordering errors are characterized by 'the incorrect placement of a morpheme or group of morphemes in an utterance'. The morphemes do not take place in where it should be, for example:
"He is all the time late"
The words all the time late is misordered. Misordering occur systematically for both L2 and L1 learners in construction.

3. Research Method

This study was conducted in Multi-Q elementary school. The data were taken from the students' descriptive texts which were found in sixth grade students of Multi-Q elementary school which consist of 11 students. The method that used in this research is observation method. The technique used to collect the data are divided into: asking permission to the headmaster of Multi-Q elementary school, giving blank paper to the

students to make descriptive text with a free topic, and collecting the texts are made by students. The data were analyzed qualitatively. The process of data analyzing were: the errors were found by reading every sentence carefully, find out the errors and classifying them according the types of error, then the of types errors analyzed based on the theory from Dulay (1982) and also supported with other theory from Swan (1995), Thomson & Martine (1983), and Azar (1941).

4. Result and Discussion

Based on the data analysis, it can be concluded that the process of learning second language can be difficult if the students did not have interest and did not put much attention in learning process because the second language and the first language have different grammatical rules. It could be seen clearly that there are four types of errors found from students' descriptive texts. They are omission, addition, misformation and misordering.

a. Omission

Table 2. The Data of Omission

Original Sentence	Reconstructed Sentence
1. My hobby is **play**_ handphone (Students 3:3)	My hobby is **playing** hand phone

In the data above, the students omit the –ing form where the function of the word as a gerund. A gerund is the –ing form of a verb. It is used as a noun (Azar, 1941:368). Gerund can also functions as a subject, di rect object, or as the subject complement. Based on data above, the student omitted the –ing form where the function of the word as a gerund of the subject complement because it describes the subject after the verb "is". Therefore, the suggestion for the data above is the word play should be added by –ing form and become play**ing**. The errors caused by intralingual transfer because the students omitted an item that must be appeared in the sentence. It means that the students do not understand yet with the structure and hardly to understand the tenses that usually used in descriptive texts. Based on interview result, the teacher rarely give the students exercise about writing and only focus on the students' textbook. This factor can also categorized as context of learning because if the teacher focus with the textbook only, the students may have difficulties to understand the material and they will make the same error.

b. Addition

Table 3. The Data of Addition

Original Sentence	Reconstructed Sentence
1. I usually go **to** there with my family (Student 11:10)	I usually go there with my family

Preposition is a word that are used to link a noun or phrase to another part of the sentence. There are two common preposition, such as preposition of position (under, on, in front of, etc.) and preposition of time (at, in, on). From the data above is categorized as error and classified as addition. Addition error is the opposite of omission which is the use of an item that should not appear in a sentence. From the data above, the students added an item that is not necessary by adding preposition "**to**" before the adverb there. It condition makes the sentence incorrect. Therefore, preposition "**to**" in this sentence should be omitted because adverb there in the data above already modified the verb go and it do not need any preposition. The error that the students made causes by intralingual transfer where the students added an item that is not appropriate and made an error. It can be seen that the student still not really understood with the English structure because of the difference of their mother tongue.

c. Misformation

Table 4. The Data of Misformation

Original Sentence	Reconstructed Sentence
1. My dog have white **tooths** (Student 1:5)	My dog has white **teeth**

The sentence that found in students' descriptive texts above is categorized as misformation of plural form because the student used the wrong form to tell the plural form noun. A plural form noun is a word that indicates that there are more than one person, animal, place, thing, or idea. When talking about plural noun, simply we use the same word and adding an –s, -es, or –ies at the end of the noun. However there are also some nouns for irregular noun. Irregular nouns follow no specific rules, so it is best to memorized. Based on data above, the students failed to form a plural noun in irregular form. The plural form of tooth in data above is not tooths. The correct plural form of tooth is teeth. So, it should be changed into teeth. This factor of error is also because the student does not understood clearly with English structure. The student already known the plural form of noun is added by suffix –s, but the student did not know that not all of plural form should be added by suffix –s. This factor called as intralingual transfer.

d. Misordering

Table 5. The Data of Misordering

Original Sentence	Reconstructed Sentence
1. I play **game mobile legend** in my handphone (Student 3:8)	.I play **mobile legend game** in my handphone
2. He work in **Villa Tiying Tutul** (Student 4:3)	He works in **Tiying Tutul Villa**
3. My **place favorite** is Bali Zoo (Student 11:2)	My **favorite place** is Bali Zoo

All the sentences above are categorized as misordering because the students used the wrong placement for some words or morphemes in their sentences. Based on the data above, the students try to translate their native language which is Indonesian into the target language because the differentiate structures of their native language and target language then they also do not know the appropriate structures or expressions which have to be used in the target language. The data 1, 2, and 3 if translated into Indonesian, it will be Indonesian structure where the students have failed in placing the items in English structure which caused them to create incorrect sentences. Therefore the items "game mobile legend" (in data 1) should be changed by "mobile legend game", items "Villa Tiying Tutul" (in data 2) should be changed by "Tiying Tutul Villa", and items "place favorite" (in data 3) should be changed by "favorite place".

The factor of those error is called as interlingual transfer where the students combine mother tongue and second language. It means that the learners tried to mix their language when they practiced English as their second language. It will make the learners feel difficult to organize their language in writing then they will make an error. The students just write what they translated from their first language without knowing it makes errors in their sentences.

5. Conclusion

Based on the collecting data and discussion in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that the process of learning second language can be difficult if the students did not have interest and did not put much attention in learning process because the second language and the first language have different grammatical rules. In learning English language we need to start from knowing the grammatical of that language, it will be easier to learn the English language. The sixth grade students of Multi-Q elementary school have not mastered in grammatical English as what found in the analysis. From the data, we could know that the sixth grade

students had a problem in using tense that was applied in paragraph.

Acknowledgements

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