




INTERLINGUAL AND INTRALINGUAL INTERFERENCES IN ENGLISH NARRATIVE ESSAYS WRITTEN BY INDONESIAN STUDENTS



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ABSTRACT

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This study analyses the types and frequency of errors detected in L2 learners' narrative essays. It involved 50 first-semester English students in a private university in West Java, Indonesia, who enrolled in the *Paragraph and Narrative Writing* class. The descriptive qualitative approach was used. The data were gathered from the students' narrative essays during their final semester exam. Identified errors were classified into several categories, calculated, analyzed, and categorized according to their causes based on error analysis theories. The results showed that the most common errors were in the production and distribution of verb groups, the use of articles, spelling, prepositions, parts of speech, singular/plural forms, and questions. The causes of errors were both interlingual and intralingual interferences: interference of the mother tongue, overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of rules, and false concepts hypothesized. It is hoped that by knowing the types and the frequency of errors, and their causes, students are able to improve their writing skill in English, and teachers are able to better adapt their teaching methods and materials.

Contribution/ Originality: This study contributes to the existing literature as it complements the current research which has been done in numerous countries in which English is not the native language.

1. INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the four language skills. It is a complex process even in the first language and it is more complicated to write in a second language. It is an "intricate" and complex task; it is the "most difficult of the language abilities to acquire" (Corder, 1974). The ability to write well does not occur instantly. It is usually learned through a complex process. Besides dealing with telling ideas, learners also have to convey messages in their writing effectively. However, due to the fact that writing in English as L2 is complex for the learners, errors are inevitable. Corder (1967) in his paper "The significance of learners' error" referred errors to the "systematic errors of the learners from which his knowledge of language to date can be reconstructed" (p. 25). In other words, they show how far the learner has progressed in acquiring the second language at a particular point in the course. According to James (1998) and Ellis (2000) errors are systematic, and reflect a lack of learner competence, and might occur many times unrecognized by the learner.

A learner's errors are important to the process of language learning. They must be viewed positively as they are significant in three different ways (Corder, 1967): 1) to the teacher, they show how far the learner has progressed; 2) to the researcher, they prove how language is learned or acquired and reveal the learning strategies and procedures employed by the learner to discover the language; 3) to the learner himself, the making of errors is a means of learning the nature of the language. Thus, a learner's errors are inevitable but also important in the process of language learning, without which improvement will not occur.

This research analysed errors produced by the first semester students of a private university in West Java, Indonesia, in their writings. The students underwent a set of instructional practices in the formal instructional setting of the *Paragraph and Narrative Writing* class for one semester.

The research questions are as follows:

1. What types of errors are made by the students in their writings?
2. How frequent do those errors occur?
3. What are the common causes of those errors?

This research analysed the types of errors and their frequency of occurrence, and investigated the causes of the errors. By knowing the types of errors and their causes, learners can improve their writing ability on writing accurately and fluently in English. In addition, teachers can improve their methods of teaching and create better materials. In this way, the teaching and learning process of the second language can be of benefit to both the students and the teachers.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Error analysis is a "fundamental and relevant tool in language teaching in order to reorganize and transform the teacher's point of view and readdress his/her methodology, with the aim of fixing and fulfilling the students' gaps" (Vasques, 2008). The purpose of error analysis is to find "what the learner knows and does not know" and to "ultimately enable the teacher to supply him not just with the information that his hypothesis is wrong, but also importantly, with the right sort of information or data for him to form a more adequate concept of a rule in the target language" (Corder, 1974). Brown (1987) defined error analysis as a process through which learner errors are observed, analyzed and classified in order to elicit some information about the system operating within the learner.

According to the causes of errors, Richard (1971) distinguished two sources of errors: 1) interlingual errors, "errors caused by the interference of the learner's mother tongue"; and, 2) intralingual and developmental errors which "reflect learner's competence at a particular stage, and illustrate some of the general characteristics of language acquisition. Their origins are found within the structure of English itself, and through reference to the strategy by which a second language is acquired and taught" (p.173). He further stated that there are four types and causes for intralingual errors and developmental errors:

- 1) Over-generalization errors occur when the learner creates one deviant structure on the basis of two regular structures.
- 2) Ignorance of rule restrictions occur when the learner fails to observe the restrictions of existing structures so that he/she applies inapplicable rules to a context. "Some rule restriction errors may be accounted for in terms of analogy; and other instances may result from the rote learning of rules" (p.175).
- 3) Incomplete application of rules occur when the learner fails to apply a complete structure required to produce acceptable sentences.
- 4) False concepts occur when the learner does not fully comprehend the concept in the target language.

Richard's distinction of the causes of learners' errors became the basis of this analysis, due to the fact that his numerous case-studies have found that there are types of systematic errors in English usage which are produced by speakers of particular mother tongues, besides the errors caused by the L1 interference.

Extensive research has been done in the area of error analysis with English language as L2. The results of prior research inspired me to research Indonesian students' errors in writing English. Some research was conducted to investigate interlingual interference, that is, the interference of the mother tongue, and some other studies dealt with both the interlingual, and the intralingual interference of the target language.

Benzigar (2013) conducted research to investigate why the undergraduate students from rural Madurai colleges in Tamil Nadu, South India continued to produce errors in their writings. The findings showed that the students made 973 errors, mostly as the result of applying mother tongue rules to English language structures. The students' ignorance that the verb is very important in English language was the main cause.

Sawalmeh (2013) investigated the errors in 32 English essays written by Arabic-speaking students of the Preparatory year program at University of Ha'il in Saudi Arabia. Identified errors were classified into verb tense, word order, singular/plural form, subject-verb agreement, double negatives, spellings, capitalization, articles, sentence fragments, and prepositions. The errors were mostly the influence of Arabic as resulted from a L1 transfer.

Kaweera (2013), in his review of interlingual and intralingual interference in EFL context, found that errors identified in Thai student's writing were "not only a result of the first language interference habits to the learning of L2, but also inadequate acquisition of the target language" (p. 16). A high frequency of errors occurred because the structures of the L1 and L2 had significant differences. In addition, some specific rules in the target language might be rather confusing and might have some exceptions in which the learners need to understand, memorize and practice in order to acquire them.

In a study analyzing errors made by the teacher education students in the Phillipines, Lasaten (2014) reported that seven common errors were detected in verb tenses, sentence structure, punctuations, word choice, spelling, prepositions, and articles. These errors were caused by the interference of the L1 and inadequate understanding of grammatical rules of English, alongside the students' limited vocabulary in the target language.

According to Sun (2014), who conducted error analysis research with 30 undergraduate students in Shandong province, Chinese EFL learners experienced the most difficulty in the usage of the English article system. The other types of errors he also found were Chinese-English expressions, tense and verb forms, misuse of prepositions, subject-verb agreement, and misuse of adverbials. Higher frequency of grammatical errors in these aspects were due to the "discrepancies in the article system of English and Chinese, the absence of inflections and number agreement in Chinese" (p.181).

This research analysed the types of errors and their frequency of occurrence, and investigated the causes of the errors in Indonesian students' narrative essays.

3. METHODOLOGY

The research method was descriptive qualitative. The focus was on errors produced by students in their essays: the types and frequency of errors; and the causes of errors. The research was carried out at a private university in West Java, Indonesia. The location was suitable as the objects of this research were the first semester students of this university. The students had attended a semester long course at the English Department under the supervision of their instructor before they were asked to write a narrative essay for their final exam. They had to choose one of the following topics:

- a. Your first time away from home.
- b. The days you decide to change your life.
- c. A communication barrier.
- d. Begin with: It was the first day of winter.

The students wrote a three-paragraph narrative essay in about 150-200 words and they were given sufficient time to compose it.

This research was conducted according to the steps in any typical error analysis research: collecting samples of learner language, identifying the errors, classifying the errors, quantifying the errors, and explaining the errors. Each essay was analyzed and identified errors were classified into several categories: the production of verb groups, distribution of verb groups, the use of articles, spelling, prepositions, parts of speech, singular/plural forms, and questions. The frequency of occurrence in each category was also counted. The errors were then explained so that the causes of errors could be determined.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Data analysis showed that there were a total number of 615 errors identified from the students' essays. They were categorized into eight types of errors. Table 1 illustrates the number of errors in each type and their frequency of occurrence:

Table-1. Types of error and frequency of occurrence.

Types of error	Frequency	Percentage
Errors in the distribution of verb groups	343	55.78
Errors in the production of verb groups	119	19.35
Errors in the use of articles	38	6.18
Errors in spelling	35	5.69
Errors in the use of prepositions	27	4.39
Wrong use of parts of speech in word formation	21	3.41
Wrong use of singular/plural form and agreement	20	3.25
Errors in the use of questions	12	1.95
Total	615	100

Source: Data collected from the students' essays.

It is clearly seen that the errors in the distribution of verb groups contributed the most. There were 343 errors out of 615 (55.78%). Errors in using English tenses were in this type of errors. Since the topic of the essay that the students were asked to write dealt with things or experiences that had happened in the past, the tense that should have been used was the past tense. However, many errors in tenses were produced. "By tenses we understand the correspondence between the form of the verb and the concept of time (Quirk and Greenbaum, 1982)." The errors occurred because Indonesian verbs do not indicate time whereas English verbs change according to time. Differences between the verb system of L1 (Indonesian) and English tense make it difficult for the students to comprehend the English notion of tense. In other words, the errors are attributed to the students' poor knowledge of the English tenses. For example:

- (a) It is axactly about a year ago.
- (b) Last month I go to Bali Island with my friends.
- (c) At 12.30 I had already arrived.
- (d) I really loved snow since I was a child.
- (e) I never did it before.
- (f) It was Sunday and the weather is perfect.
- (g) I took the exam and pass.

Various kinds of tenses were used by the students instead of the required past tense and past perfect tense. In sentences (a) and (b), the students reduced the _ed marker in past context, which appears to carry no meaning since pastness had already been indicated lexically by the time indicators: the adverbial of time 'a year ago' and 'last month'. Such errors are due to overgeneralization.

In sentence (c) the adverbial of time 'at 12.30' indicated a relevant point in the past so the verb used should have been 'arrived'. The correct sentence was 'I arrived at 12.30'. In sentences (d) and (e), 'since I was a child' and 'before' were time-indicators that the perfective aspect should have been used. As the topic deals with things that

had happened in the past, the past perfect should have been used. However, Indonesian has nothing corresponding to the English distinction between simple past and present perfect, which makes the students find English past and present perfect difficult (Yong, 2001). The correct sentences were 'I had really loved snow since I was a child' and 'I had never done it before'. The students were aware of the use of past tense but they were ignorant of the rule restrictions concerning the past perfect tense.

In composing sentences (f) and (g), the students were aware of the use of past tense for showing things had happened in the past but they were not careful enough to be consistent in using it. The correct sentences were 'It was Sunday and the weather was perfect' and 'I took the exam and passed.' This fact is understandable as they did not have to think of tenses when composing an essay in their L1 (Indonesian).

The second major problem was in the production of verb groups with the frequency of occurrence being 119/615 (19.35%). As we know, there are quite a lot of kinds of verb patterns in English. In his book *Guide to Patterns and Usage*, Hornby (1975) elaborates twenty five verb patterns, including the use of finite and non-finite verbs. On the contrary, the verb forms in Indonesian as the L1 of the students, do not operate in finite and non-finite verb phrases. That is why the students produced a large number of errors in the production of verb groups.

The first kind of errors was the use of 'be+verb stem+ed' for 'verb stem+ed'. The following examples were taken from the students' essays:

- (a) My mom was called me.
- (b) He was slept.
- (c) I was enjoyed reading.
- (d) He was just stood there doing nothing.
- (e) I was almost gave up

The students knew and understood 'was' as a marker of past tense. So in producing the sentences, the students used 'was' together with the past form of the verb, which was incorrect according to the English verb patterns. The finite verbs are full verbs which do not need the auxiliary 'be'. Thus, the errors are derived from "faulty comprehension of distinctions in the target language" (Richard, 1971).

The second kind of errors is the use of wrong verb form after auxiliary 'do'. Some examples were:

- (a) They didn't said anything.
- (b) He didn't even felt guilty.
- (c) She didn't stole anything.
- (d) I didn't came to class.

The students were aware of using 'did' as the past tense of 'do' for negative sentences to refer to things that had happened in the past but they overgeneralized the rules by using the past form of the verbs following the auxiliary 'did+not'. So instead of writing the sentence "they didn't say anything", they only added "didn't" to negate the sentence "they said anything", and retained the past form 'said' instead of using a bare infinitive after "didn't". In Indonesian, to negate a sentence, only the word '*tidak*' is added in front of the verb, without changing anything to the verb itself. It seems that the students were influenced by their L1 in composing the sentence. The same explanation is also apt for the other examples (b), (c), (d) and (f).

The third kind of errors in this group was the use of the wrong verb form after modal auxiliaries. Some examples were:

- (a) He could helped me forget
- (b) I couldn't believed her.
- (c) I should never gave up.

The students correctly used modal auxiliaries in their past form but they were not aware of the fact that the modal auxiliaries should be followed by bare infinitives so they used the past form of the verbs instead, as the essays

dealt with things in the past. They thought that both the auxiliary and the verb should be in their past forms. This over-generalization may be the result of the students reducing their linguistic burden.

The fourth kind of errors in this group was the wrong form of non-finite verb for verb + (O) + to infinitive.

The following are examples taken from the students' essays:

- (a) I decided to ran far away.
- (b) I tried to crossed the road.
- (c) She asked me to went to the market.
- (d) I liked to saw snow.

Indonesian does not operate in finite and non-finite verb phrases as English does. The verbs are known only as verbs. So, when writing a sentence about the past in English, the students tended to change both the finite verbs and the non-finite verbs following the finite verbs into their past forms, which caused errors.

Similar errors were detected when the students used the wrong form of the non-finite verbs following the finite verbs. Instead of using 'to infinitive' after certain verbs, they used 'to+present participle'. For examples, 'She decided to guiding me' and 'I tried to sleeping'. They failed to recognize the correct pattern.

The following examples show the fact that the students were ignorant of the rule restrictions in English verb patterns:

- (a) I wanted told her about it.
- (b) I started felt tired.
- (c) I didn't like stayed here.

They failed to use 'to infinitive' following the finite verbs. They were then influenced by their L1; they tended to directly translate the ideas from their L1 into English and the results were absolutely incorrect. The above examples shared the same pattern with Indonesian sentences: '*Saya ingin memberi tahu dia tentang hal itu*'; '*Saya mulai merasa lelah*'; and '*Saya tidak suka tinggal di sini*'.

The students also failed to comprehend the rule restrictions concerning the verbs which should be followed by 'bare infinitives'. Some examples were:

- (a) She made me went to school.
- (b) He let me opened the gift.

The finite verbs 'made' and 'let' are in their correct form, but they are not followed by bare infinitives 'go' and 'open'. The non-finite verbs were changed into their past form, following the form of the finite verbs, instead.

The same thing happened to the verb patterns in which bare infinitive/ present participle should follow another kind of finite verbs. The students used the past form of the non-finite verbs. For example:

- (a) I could see my mother prayed.
- (b) I felt someone followed me.
- (c) I just finished picked the ingredients. . . .

As the essay dealt with past occurrences, they used the past form of both the finite and the non-finite verbs. Again, it is clear that the students were not aware of the rule restrictions concerning certain kind of verbs.

Besides the wrong use of non-finite verbs after certain verbs, errors also occurred in the use of the wrong non-finite verbs after adjectives. Some examples were as follows:

- (a) I was so shocked to heard it.
- (b) I felt happy to came to my home again.

The pattern should be 'adjective + to infinitive'. However, as the events they narrated happened in the past, the students thought of the rules for the simple past tense and that they had to use the past form of all the verbs (finite and non-finite). In their L1, there is no finite and non-finite verbs; there are only verbs. This explained the many errors they made in this group.

Another type of error that occurred and belongs to the production of verb groups was the omission of 'be' before adjectives. The examples were:

- (a) I always lonely.
- (b) I still scared.
- (c) My mother really worried.

The English copula 'to be' is very important in a sentence in which the nominal part of the predicate (or the subject complement) is an adjective. In the students' L1 (Indonesian) 'to be' corresponds with '*adalah*', which is frequently optional. It is "dropped in a sentence that expresses a condition or state of existence" (Yong, 2001). The three examples above in Indonesian are: (a) *Saya selalu kesepian*; (b) *Saya masih ketakutan*; and (c) *Ibu saya sangat cemas*. So, in producing the English sentences, the students thought of the Indonesian rules, and thus, they dropped the copula 'to be'. Here, the students' L1 contributed a lot to this type of error.

The third major problem was errors in the use of articles. There were 38 errors out of 615 (6.18%). The specific use of definite, indefinite, and zero articles is confusing to the Indonesian students of English and errors often occur. Some examples were:

- (a) The next morning, I went to airport.
- (b) Then I went to bathroom.
- (c) In afternoon, I go home.
- (d) In morning, I wake up at 10 o'clock.
- (e) It was State University of Makassar.
- (f) . . . whose moms greet their children at a door.
- (g) He was a murderer who killed my grandfather.

The students' L1 (Indonesian) does not have articles. There are demonstratives *ini* (this) and *itu* (that) which can overlap the function and assume the meaning of 'the'. However, the use is often optional and consequently learners tend to drop the definite article in producing sentences in English (Yong, 2001).

Omission of the definite article 'the' is shown in sentences (a) and (b). In English, a definite article is used for all non classes when the reference is clearly to something definite (definite specific reference) (Quirk and Greenbaum, 1982). In sentences (a) and (b) all the nouns were made particular in the context of the essays, so the definite article 'the' should have been used, instead of no articles: 'the airport' and 'the bathroom'. The same kind of nouns in sentences (f) and (g) needed the definite article 'the', instead of the indefinite article 'a': the door, and the murderer. The definite article 'the' is also used for nouns which indicate periods of time, particularly with the preposition 'in' (p.74). The nouns in sentences (c) and (d), therefore, needed a definite article: 'in the afternoon' and 'in the morning'. Nouns modified by an 'of phrase' such as in sentence (e) also needed a definite article: the State University of Makassar.

Besides the errors in the use of the definite article 'the', the students also produced errors in the use of the indefinite article 'a'. Some examples were:

- (a) I heard dog barking outside.
- (b) My uncle had wife and two daughters.
- (c) I would be diligent student.
- (d) My father had new job there.
- (e) I went to the place where there was
- (f) A strange man came with the baby in his hand.

An indefinite article is used for single count nouns when the references are specific (indefinite specific reference) (p. 69). In sentences (a) and (b) the references of the nouns were specific as we had in mind specific specimens of the class. They needed the indefinite article 'a': 'a dog' and 'a wife' instead of no articles; so do the nouns in sentences

(e) and (f): 'a place' and 'a baby', instead of the definite article 'the'. In sentences (c) and (d) indefinite articles should have been added to class nouns defined by adjectives: 'a diligent student' and 'a new job'.

The last thing about the English articles is the use of zero article. Zero articles is usually taken by both concrete and abstract non-count nouns when they have a generic reference (Quirk and Greenbaum, 1982). In sentences (a) 'He got a long hair', and (b) 'I played a snow with my brother', zero articles should have been used for the nouns 'hair' and 'snow' because both were non-count nouns. Other examples of errors were as follows:

- (c) My father and I go . . . by a car.
- (d) We're going to have a dinner in a restaurant.
- (e) My father and I go to the Bandung.

The nouns in the above three sentences also needed zero articles. In sentence (c) the count noun 'car' was in a rather specialized use, chiefly in certain idiomatic expression (p. 73): 'to go by car' (functioning as means of transport with 'by'). In sentence (d) the noun was expressing a meal: 'to have dinner', and in sentence (e) the word 'Bandung' was a proper noun which "does not share such characteristics of common nouns as article contrast" (p. 76). The English language has a complex article system, which confuses Indonesian learners. "They failed to observe the rule restriction by applying rules to contexts where they do not apply" (Richard, 1971).

The fourth major problem was errors in spelling. There were various kinds of errors that the students made in spelling. The most common among them was the confusion in using either single or double consonants. Some examples were:

- (a) I packed my lugage.
- (b) This bad habbit becomes part of my lifestyle.
- (c) He only brought a double barrel riffle.
- (d) That day was really unforgettable.
- (e) They look peacefull.
- (f) She dissapeared.
- (g) I really regreted all I'd done.
- (h) My friend asked me to accompany her.

In sentences (a) to (h), the confusion occurred in three kinds of parts of speech: noun, adjective and verb. In sentence (a) to (c) the nouns should have been spelt 'luggage', 'habit', and 'rifle'. As for the adjectives used, sentences (d) and (e) showed the errors. The adjectives should have been 'unforgettable' and 'peaceful'. And for the verbs, the verbs in sentences (f) to (h) should have been spelt 'disappeared', 'regretted', and 'accompany'.

This kind of confusion is due to several reasons. The most common one was the students' carelessness. They did not pay attention to the correct spelling of the words, such as in (a), (b), (c), (f) and (h). At the same time, irregular spelling patterns also contributed to the errors. Another reason was the students' lack of awareness of spelling rules in some cases, such as in (d) and (g). There is a rule that the "final base consonants (except 'x') are doubled before inflections beginning with a vowel letter when the preceding vowel is stressed and spelled with a single letter" (Quirk and Greenbaum, 1982). So, the consonant 't' in 'unforgettable' and 'regretted' should have been doubled. Error in (e) was merely caused by the students' lack of awareness that the adjective suffix was '-ful', not '-full'.

Another kind of error that the students made in spelling was the use of the incorrect vowel or consonant. Some examples were as follows:

- (a) We didn't have any ingridients.
- (b) I found boredem.
- (c) Apperently it was my mom.
- (d) The extreme cold weather sometimes make my nose bleed.
- (e) . . . whose mom great their children at [the] door.

- (f) They expected my choise.
- (g) There was nothing spesial there.

The words 'ingridients', 'boredem', 'apparently', 'blead', and 'great' in sentences (a) to (e) have one incorrect vowel each, while the words 'choise' and 'spesial' in sentences (f) and (g) have one incorrect consonant each. The correct spelling of those words are 'ingredients', 'boredom', 'apparently', 'bleed', 'greet', 'choice', and 'special'. These errors were due to the students' lack of awareness of English spelling rules and the queerness of English spelling itself. In the students' L1 Indonesian, what is written is the same as what is spelt. In English it is different; the pronunciation of a written word is unpredictable unless we know for sure how to pronounce it.

In this kind of error, the students adjusted the spelling of the words to the sound they made when pronouncing them as in (a), (b), (c), (f), and (g). In (d) and (e), the students made the wrong analogy of spelling with the words they had known already, such as bead, lead, meat, and neat, which are all written with 'ea' and pronounced /i:/.

The next two kinds of errors in spelling were the transposition of two letters, as shown in the following examples:

- (a) There are many witnesss.
- (b) I became more excited.

And entirely wrong spelling of the words, as shown in the following examples:

- (c) We are making omlate.
- (d) My mom told me she was corius.

The errors in (a) and (b) were due to the students' carelessness, whereas in (c) to (d), they were caused by the students' limited vocabulary.

The fifth problem was errors in the use of preposition. Errors in this category occurred in the students' essays with the frequency of 27/615 (4.39%). The students used the preposition 'to' instead of nopreposition. Some examples taken from the students' essays are:

- (a) I went to home.
- (b) I forgot the way to home.

In the sentences above, the students used the preposition 'to', which was wrong because no preposition was necessary. In doing so the students were influenced by their L1 (Indonesian) '*ke*' (= English preposition 'to') such as in '*saya pulang ke rumah*'. In English, however, the word 'home' is an adverb which means 'to or at the place where you live' Hornby (2015). So, there was already a preposition 'to' or 'at' included in the word itself. The addition of 'to' in those sentences was certainly redundant.

Another kind of error occurs in the next two sentences:

- (c) I tell to my parents about the university.
- (d) I asked to mom.

The verbs 'tell' and 'ask' are transitive verbs which do not take any preposition if they are combined with nouns as objects. The Indonesian verbs '*memberitahukan/ mengatakan*' (= tell) and '*bertanya*' (= ask) are followed by '*kepada*' (= to) if they are followed by nouns as objects. '*Saya bertanya kepada ibu saya*' was the Indonesian sentence the students were thinking of when they produced 'I asked to mom'. Thus, the students were influenced by their L1 when producing such errors. The errors were due to the L1 lexical interference as the students directly translated the sentences from Indonesian into English.

Sentences (f) 'Since June I had lived in there' and (g) 'My parents was at there' were examples of errors in the use of the prepositions 'in' and 'at' before the adverb of place 'there'. As an adverb, 'there' means 'in, at, or to that place or position' (p. 1623). The students, however, used the prepositions 'in' and 'at', which was redundant. In Indonesian, 'there' means 'disana'. It was obvious that in both languages the words 'there' and 'di sana' do not need additional preposition before them. The errors were obviously due to the students' carelessness.

Some other examples which were categorized as the addition of unnecessary prepositions, are shown in the following examples:

- (h) We will go to Bandung for tomorrow.
- (i) One day I won for almost 10 million rupiahs.
- (j) I really regretted for all I've done.

In sentence (h), the adverb of time 'tomorrow' did not need a preposition before it. In sentences (i) and (j) 'won' and 'regretted' were both transitive verbs which did not need a preposition when followed by a noun as object. In this case, errors occurred because of the student's ignorance of rule restrictions concerning the transitive verbs.

Different from the previous kind of errors in the use of preposition, in the following sentences (k) to (n) the students omitted the necessary prepositions for verbs that need a preposition to give a certain meaning.

- (k) Listening her, my heart beat so fast.
- (l) I heard a sound and I searched it.
- (m) They stared each other.
- (n) I didn't believe God.

The verb 'listen' in (k) needs 'to' if followed by an object; the verb 'search' in (l) needs 'for' to give the meaning of 'look carefully for something' Hornby (2015); 'stare' in (m) needs 'at' to give the meaning of 'to look at each other for a long time'(p.1525); and 'believe' in (n) needs 'in' to form the meaning of 'feeling certain that God exists' (p.127). From the errors detected, it seems that the students were ignorant of the restriction of rules concerning prepositional verbs.

The sixth type of error produced by students in their essays was the wrong use of parts of speech. There were 21 errors out of 615 (3.41%). The most common errors included the wrong use of verbs, nouns, adjectives, and adverbs. For examples:

- (a) She wanted to be a success person.
- (b) I am very happiness.
- (c) Our ambitions were totally difference.
- (d) I can see the warmth smile.

The errors were obviously due to the students' lack of understanding the rules of word formation in English to differentiate the parts of speech.. In sentences (a) to (d), adjectives were needed but the students used nouns, instead. 'Success' is a noun and the adjective suffix '-ful' should be added to it. 'Happiness' is a noun derived from the adjective 'happy'; the adjective suffix '-ent' should be added to the verb 'differ'; while 'warmth' is a noun derived from the adjective 'warm'.

The following examples shows the wrong use of verbs, instead of adjectives or nouns:

- (e) I was very confuse.
- (f) I take care of my resign.
- (g) Our prays were never really answered.

In sentence (e), an adjective ('confused') was needed but the students used a verb (confuse), instead. The students were ignorant of the rules in word formation that the past participle of certain verbs can function as adjectives. In sentences (f) and (g) the nouns 'resignation' and 'prayers' should have been used, instead of the verbs 'resign' and 'pray'. The students were not aware of the fact that to form a noun from the verb 'resign', they should have added the noun suffix '-ation'; and from the verb 'pray', a noun could have been formed by adding the noun suffix '-er'.

Another kind of error was the wrong use of an adverb instead of an adjective, as shown in sentence (h) ". . . as usually my parents didn't allow me". An adjective ('as usual') was required while the student provided an adverb which was derived from the adjective 'usual' + suffix '-ly'. It can be concluded that the students did not understand the function of different suffixes added to the base in the process of English word-formation.

Errors also occurred in the use of participial adjectives. Some of the examples were:

- (i) The forest is so cold, dark and frightened.
- (j) I feel worrying to go outside.
- (k) She said she was boring at the office.
- (l) I was scary.

The students had already been aware of the fact that they had to use adjectives: 'frightened', 'worrying', 'boring', and 'scary'. However, the adjectives chosen were improperly used as the meaning of the sentences became awkward. They had to use the other form of each adjective: 'frightening', 'worried', 'bored', and 'scared' to convey the meaning intended. Both kinds are participial adjectives but different suffixes show different meanings so they cannot be used interchangeably. The errors reflected the students' confusion when choosing which proper participial adjectives to use.

The seventh type of error was the wrong use of singular/plural forms and subject-verb concord. There were twenty errors out of 615 (3.25%). Some of the examples were:

- (a) Many problem had happened.
- (b) I finished all the chore.
- (c) In the first semester, I got 4 subject.

In sentences (a) to (c) the students omitted the plural markers from the intended nouns. In producing the sentences, the students thought of their L1 system of plurality. In Indonesian, plurals are marked by repeating the nouns; for example: the plural form of '*buku*' (book) is '*buku-buku*' (books). However, if a plural quantifier/predeterminer/numeral is used before the noun, the noun is not repeated as the quantifier/determiner/numeral has shown the plural form (Yong, 2001): '*banyak masalah*' in (a), '*semua pekerjaan*' in (b), and '*4 mata pelajaran*' in (c). In English, despite the plural quantifier/predeterminer/numeral, a plural marker should also have been affixed to the noun as it is usually done to form plurality: 'many problems', 'all the chores', and '4 subjects'. Thus, the students were not aware of the rules in the L2 concerning the different system of plurality so they were likely to drop plural endings after number or plural quantifiers as in their L1.

The errors in the concord of number between the subject and the verb were shown in the following examples:

- (d) All of the people was welcoming the winter.
- (e) The eyes was strange.

In English, a singular subject requires a singular verb, and a plural subject requires a plural verb. Sentences (d) and (e) showed the errors in subject-verb concord. 'All the people' and 'the eyes', are plural subjects, so they require a plural verb 'were'. The students were aware of the plural nouns as the subjects but they were not aware of the required plural verb for the plural subjects.

The eighth and last type of error was in the use of questions with the frequency of 12/615 (1.95%). Some of the errors were shown in the following examples:

- (a) What he looks like?
- (b) Why everyone seemed covering him from his guilt?
- (c) Why everyone didn't believe me?
- (d) I had no idea where did we want to go.
- (e) I didn't know where was I.

In English, wh-questions are formed by placing the question-word itself in the first position and by inverting subject and operator in all cases except that in which the Q-element is subject. If there is no auxiliary in the equivalent statement, 'do' is introduced as operator in the question (Quirk and Greenbaum, 1982). In sentences (a) and (b) the students had correctly placed the question-word in the first position but failed to apply the complete rule. They did not recognize that their sentences needed 'do' or 'did' as the operator in the questions as there was no auxiliary. The correct sentences should have been:

(a1) What does he look like?

(b1) Why did everyone seem covering him from his guilt?

In sentence (c) the student had used “didn’t” but failed to invert the subject and the operator to form a question. The correct sentence is ‘Why didn’t everyone believe me?’.

In sentences (d) and (e) the errors occurred in embedded sentences. The students failed to invert the subject and the verb to form a complete declarative statement. It is obvious that the errors were the results of the students applying incomplete rules of interrogative information.

5. CONCLUSION

From the discussion in the previous chapter, it was shown that there were eight major types of errors made by 50 Indonesian students in their essays. They were errors in the production and distribution of verb groups, the use of articles, spelling, prepositions, singular/plural forms, parts of speech, and questions. The production and distribution of verb groups contributed the most (75,13%). Included in these types were tenses and verb patterns, which were difficult for the Indonesian students to understand as the students’ L1 (Indonesian) does not have the same patterns.

Some types of errors Indonesian students made were also shared by other learners of English from other countries. Among them were tense and verb forms, articles, spelling, and prepositions. These were the areas that the learners found difficult to comprehend as they were different to their mother tongue. When facing difficulty in expressing ideas in English, they tended to use the patterns in their L1 that they were familiar with. As a result, they failed to produce grammatically correct English sentences.

The errors identified in the students’ essays were caused by both interlingual and intralingual interferences. They were caused by the inappropriate L1 transfer or interference from the students’ mother tongue, over-generalization or redundancy reduction, the failure to observe the restriction of certain rules, incomplete application of rules, and false concepts hypothesized. Intralingual interferences occur more often than the interlingual ones. In some cases, such as in spelling, the errors were caused by the students’ carelessness.

Errors in writing are proven to be unavoidable in the process of learning English. Nevertheless, errors can also serve as a means of feedback for both the students and the teachers. By knowing the errors, their kinds, and their causes, it is hoped that the students will not produce the same kind of errors. They will become well motivated to improve their learning strategy in order to comprehend what they are lacking in. In doing so, the students should be introduced to all the basic verb patterns, especially those concerning the finite and non-finite verbs, at the same level when they take narrative writing classes because they have never been exposed to such complicated rules before and Indonesian does not operate in finite and non-finite verbs. They should also be given more exercises to make them familiar with the various verb patterns and make themselves trained to use them. The most important of all is the assistance from their teachers, who can tell the students the errors they have made and give them possible remedies to their problems.

As for the teachers, errors can become a reflection of their students’ development in acquiring the target language, which at the same time reflects how effective they are in transferring the materials to the students. By finding out the flaws that need further attention, the teachers can improve their teaching materials and methods to avoid fossilization of the errors.

This research deals with the first semester students of the English Department as its object. They were beginners who did not have enough knowledge of the English language yet. It is therefore suggested that further research should be carried out with a higher level of students such as students who have already taken more advanced grammar courses, to find out whether the types of errors made are similar or completely different. It is hoped that further research could be done by using other kinds of essays, such as descriptive or argumentative essays, as data in order to know what kinds of errors the students would make.

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