

## AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' GRAMMATICAL ERRORS IN WRITING RECOUNT TEXT

Ni Ketut Pertiwi Anggraeni<sup>1</sup>, Wita Wulandari<sup>2</sup>, Rita Karmila Sari<sup>3</sup>

*Universitas Indraprasta PGRI  
witawulandari@gmail.com*

### ABSTRAK

Menulis Bahasa Inggris menjadi tantangan bagi pelajar Indonesia yang menerima Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Asing. Kesulitan tersebut terjadi karena adanya perbedaan tata bahasa pada Bahasa Inggris dengan Bahasa Indonesia, sehingga seringkali membuat kesalahan pada menulis. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mencari tahu kesalahan tata bahasa pada teks *Recount* yang ditulis oleh Siswa Menengah Pertama. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan penjabaran hasil secara deskriptif pada sampel 40 teks *recount*. Dari hasil analisis data ditemukan bahwa siswa masih sering melakukan kesalahan pada penggunaan tenses. Hal ini bisa terjadi karena adanya kesalahan *interlanguage* yang berasal dari pengaruh kaidah tata bahasa Indonesia.

**Keywords:** Tata Bahasa, Kesalahan Grammar, Teks Recount

### ABSTRACT

*Writing English is a challenge for Indonesian students who perceive English as a foreign language. This struggle occurs because there are differences in English grammar and Indonesian, Thus, Errors are often made in writing. This research aims at finding out grammatical errors in Recount texts written by Junior high School Students. This research uses a qualitative method with descriptive explanation of the results on a sample of 40 recount texts. From the results of data analysis, it was found that students still often make errors in tenses. This can happen due to interlanguage errors from the influence of Indonesian grammatical rules.*

**Keywords:** *grammatical errors, tenses, recount text*

### INTRODUCTION

Writing English becomes very challenging for Indonesian students who perceive English as a foreign language. It is rather complicated because its grammatical rules are different from Indonesian language, so it is sometimes

resulting in negative transfer. For instance, in English it is known as tense to mark time in a sentence which is divided into 3 main tenses including, present tense, past tense, and future tense (Irawan 2018). Meanwhile, Indonesian does not have tenses, instead, it uses the adverbial of time to indicate time in sentences, that makes Indonesian students often possess difficulties in determining the accurate tenses both in oral and in writing communication.

The English lesson in Indonesian curriculum is designed based on student needs and is aimed to raise the functional level of English comprehension. One of which is learning and producing functional text. Functional Text is a short text that has a purpose and provides information and directions to the reader (Alisa and Rosa 2013). Recount text is one of the topics of discussion in the form of functional text found in English learning at the junior high school level. Recount text is text that functions to tell or explain an event or events that have passed. Recount text has a writing framework in the form of orientation, events, and re-orientation (Nurkholijah and Hafizh 2020). Past Tense is a tense featured in Recount Text where the verb used is Past verb or Verb 2.

Based on existing research, there are two factors that influence students in writing recount texts, namely internal factors which include students' own abilities and external factors which include teachers, materials, facilities, etc.(Sinta and Astutik 2019). Apart from that, mastery of writing recount text is also influenced by both interlingual transfer and intralingual transfer, and vocabulary mastery (Harris, Ansyar, and Radjab 2014). Research related to writing recount text has been conducted by Sartika, Khairinisaak, and Asmara (2022) stated Junior

highschool students obtained difficulties in the content of the text. Another study from Salawazo et al. (2020) discovered that language features are the most often difficulty students face in writing recount text. Therefore, there is a need for further research to discuss students' grammatical errors in writing recount text. This research aims at discovering the most frequent errors in writing recount text encountered by junior high school students.

There are two components in a grammar, they are morphology which is related to word structure and syntax which regulates sentence structure (Dixon 2005). These two components have an important role in conveying the message. Therefore, the components of morphology and syntax in learning a language really need to be paid attention to and understood. In the morphological component, there are five classes of words such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and prepositions, while syntax regulates patterns of groups of words to form phrases, clauses, sentences, and paragraphs. These two components are interrelated and influence the grammatical system.

However, most Indonesian students, especially public-school students, are not familiar with the rules of English grammar. Therefore, Errors are still often found in students' writing. In actual fact, errors in EFL students' writing are considered normal because these mistakes are part of the second language learning process. Vera, Haryudin, and Herdiyanti. (2019) states that every foreign or second language learner will definitely make mistakes caused by a lack of understanding of the second language. Error analysis is one approach to correcting grammatical errors so that these errors are not repeated by students. Error analysis is also needed

to build second language knowledge (Wijaya, Nugraheni, and Bram 2019). By recognizing the errors, teachers can plan the learning strategies needed to correct the errors.

## **METHOD**

This study employed a descriptive qualitative design approach in which the data obtained was described in a narrative manner. The first stage of analysis was identifying and classifying into ten categories namely Prepositions, Adjectives, Articles, Singular/Plural, Irregular verbs, Tenses, Concord, Passive/active sentences, Adverbs, Possessive Case. After classifying the categories, tabulation of data was conducted to count the numbers of errors of each category.

The sample was 40 students of SMP N 25 Depok. Sample selection using purposive sampling by considering access to the object of study. The purpose of sampling such as this is so that the research can be carried out effectively and efficiently, especially in terms of supervision, the condition of the research subject, the research time set conditions and licensing procedures.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Of the 40 recount texts written by students, there were 77 grammatical errors with the majority of errors located in tenses amounting to 49 errors (64%), then grammatical errors in prepositions had 14 errors (18%), adverbs with 2 errors (3%), passive/active with 1 errors (1%), concord or subject-verb agreement with 2 errors (3%), singular/plural with 4 errors (5%), articles with 3 errors (4%) and possessive case has 1 errors (1%), and irregular verbs has 1 error (1%).

**Tabel 1. Frequencies of grammatical errors**

Categories of Grammatical Errors	Frequency	Percentage
Tenses	49	64%
Preposition	14	18%
Singular/plural	4	5%
Adjectives	0	0%
Articles	3	4%
Irregular verbs	1	1%
Concord/s-v agreement	2	3%
Passive/active	1	1%
Adverb	2	3%
Possesive case	1	1%
Total	77	100%

According to the data obtained, it appears that errors in tenses are most often found in student texts. errors in tenses often occur because there are several variations of tenses in English which are very different from tenses in Indonesian. In recount text, the tenses used are past tense. Students are not used to using past tense, resulting errors in using the verb. Most errors found discovered that students often use verb one or present verb instead of verb two or past verb. Following sentences are sample of errors in tenses:

Sentence 1 : “from the top of the temple we can see such beautiful scenery” Above sentence has a modal function as an ability to see. However, since the text needs to be in the past, then the modal has to be in the past as well. Thus, the recommended sentence is “from the top of the temple we **could** see such beautiful scenery”.

Another sentence showing errors in tenses is seen in below sentence:

Sentence 2 : “there are so many small temples around the location”

Above sentence is a nominal sentence with the predicate “are”, while the past form of “are” is “were”, hence the recommended sentence is “there **were** so many small temples around the location.”

The result of this study is in accordance with previous research by Setiawan and Abbas (2018) who discovered that verb tenses were the most common errors in students' writing. Interlanguage also plays a role in the occurrences of errors in students writing (Puspita 2019). These kinds of errors happen because of the interlanguage difficulties. Interlanguage is assumed to be the result of the learners' attempts to produce the target language rules. In other words, interlanguage errors are the consequence of students' cognitive process in learning a new language (Anggraini 2018).

## **CONCLUSION**

According to the results and discussion, errors in tenses are mostly found in students' recount text. These kinds of errors may happen because of the interlanguage error known as influence of native language. Besides, Indonesian grammar does not have past tense and only uses the adverb of time instead. To minimize the errors on students' writing, teachers are expected to emphasize on the grammar and plan the lesson interactively. In addition, repetitive exercise on writing can also make the students be used to identifying the verb tenses.

To expand this study, it is recommended to conduct further research focusing on factors that cause students' errors. In addition, this research can also be

reconducted by adding more participants and instruments to obtain more valid and reliable results.

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