INTERLINGUAL AND INTRALINGUAL ERRORS IN DESCRIPTIVE WRITINGS

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Abstract

Writing in English is not easy that students need to be assisted. However, stumbling upon errors in writing is common among students that the value of error correction must be taken into account. Error analysis is a process used to identify the learning objectives attained by students in creating an inter language system. This study set out to determine the primary cause of the errors that seventh-grade students made when writing descriptive essays. Al-Khresheh's (2010) theory was used in finding interlingual errors and Richard's (1974) theory for intralingual errors. When writing descriptively, students make a variety of intralingual and interlingual mistakes. Interlingual error so includes literal translation, mother tongue interference, and transfer error. On the other hand, intralingual errors include oversimplification, disregard for rule limitations, partial rule application, and incorrect concept hypothesis. The results demonstrate that intralingual error—specifically, incomplete rule applications—and interlingual error—specifically, literal translation and interference from the mother tongue—are the primary causes of errors. In this instance, teachers must help students better grasp the laws of the target language when they are composing texts. More researches on student writing errors should take into account the gender and genre of content being studied.

Keyword: *writing, interlingual error, intralingual error*

Abstrak

Mengarang dalam bahasa Inggris tidak mudah sehingga siswa perlu didampingi. Bagaimanapun, kesalahan dalam menulis sering terjadi di kalangan siswa sehingga nilai koreksi kesalahan harus diperhatikan.

Analisis kesalahan adalah proses yang digunakan untuk mengidentifikasi tujuan pembelajaran yang dicapai siswa dalam menciptakan sistem antarbahasa. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menentukan penyebab utama kesalahan yang dibuat siswa kelas tujuh saat menulis esai deskriptif. Teori Al-Khresheh (2010) digunakan untuk menemukan kesalahan interlingual dan teori Richard (1974) untuk kesalahan intralingual. Saat menulis deskriptif, siswa membuat berbagai kesalahan intralingual dan interlingual. Kesalahan interlingual mencakup penerjemahan harfiah, interferensi bahasa ibu, dan kesalahan transfer. Di sisi lain, kesalahan intralingual mencakup penyederhanaan berlebihan, mengabaikan batasan aturan, penerapan aturan parsial, dan hipotesis konsep yang salah. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kesalahan intralingual—khususnya, penerapan aturan yang tidak lengkap—dan kesalahan interlingual—khususnya, penerjemahan harfiah dan interferensi dari bahasa ibu—adalah penyebab utama kesalahan. Dalam hal ini, guru perlu membantu siswa memahami hukum bahasa target dengan lebih baik ketika mereka menulis teks. Penelitian lebih lanjut tentang kesalahan penulisan oleh siswa harus mempertimbangkan jenis kelamin dan *genre* konten yang dipelajari.

Kata kunci: *menulis, kesalahan interlingual, kesalahan intralingual*

Introduction

For students who learn English as a second language, writing in the language is difficult (Sari et al., 2021), mainly EFL authors struggle to convey the style of other languages since it is a difficult endeavor that incorporates a number of factors (Niamah, 2018). On the other hand, writing is an important skill to be learnt because students must be able to communicate in both oral and written form (Rahayu, 2020). To communicate in written form is obliged to consider grammar as the key to writing. Grammar is the rule to write correctly, grammar use can understand the system and meaning of text and utterance comprehensively (Rahmayani, 2021). Consequently, students need assistance in the process such as dictionaries, tenses collection books, both guidance and direction from the teacher. In addition, In order to enable undergraduate students to write in English in higher education, instructors must create a suitable and well-organized plan that will motivate students to construct clear sentences when expressing their views in an article (Ni'amah & Kristanti, 2020). Therefore, they can go through what they know in their minds, and even consult dictionaries, grammar books or other reference material to help them.

A piece of writing certainly has shortcomings or errors. The mistakes made by students in writing must be corrected and analyzed such as conducting error analysis for the sake of giving correction to the students' inaccuracies. Error

analysis is an activity carried out to reveal the learning outcomes achieved by learners in developing inter language system in writing and speaking which consists of comparison between the errors made in target language and that target language itself (Rahayu, 2020). In addition, the value of error analysis is evident in three aspects, mainly to the researcher or linguist, to the language teacher, and to the learners themselves (Corder, 1981; Long & Hatcho, 2018). Even though assessments of learners' mistakes shed light on the nature of language, they also shed light on the process of teaching and learning a language.

In the writing process, students likely encounter various obstacles that cause errors. While many educators have questioned the efficacy of error correction, very few are familiar with error analysis and the theories that support it (Crosby, 2013). Brown (1980) proposes that error analysis is divided into two types, namely interlingual error and intralingual error. Chelli (2013) defines interlingual errors as being the result of language transfer which is caused by students' first language. In other words, interlingual error is the native influence of learner's mother tongue. As an example, EFL learner might say 'The book of John' instead of 'John's book.' When students write or translate into foreign languages, they create a variety of intralingual and interlingual forms. Errors in written and spoken communication are frequent since interlanguage learning is becoming more prevalent in EFL instruction. Students learning English as a second language create both intralingual and interlingual forms for a variety of reasons. Brown (1980) points out that students' presumptions lead to their interlanguage in the target language. The forms in the target language are the same as those in the native tongue (interlingual). Another is what's known as intralingual errors, which are the incorrect transfers of words inside the target language.

Studies in error analysis (Listiani & Megawati, 2023; Wu & Garza, 2014) have been conducted. In an error analysis study aimed at college students, Wu and Garza (2014) identified both intralingual and interlingual errors made by students in their writing. Different from Wu and Garza (2014), this current study attempts to recognize the errors made by junior high school students both intralingual and interlingual errors particularly in writing descriptive text. This current study examines the main source of errors occur in 30 students' descriptive texts by referring to Al-Khresheh's theory (2010) in labeling the interlingual errors, and Richard's theory (1974) in grouping intralingual errors. Listiani & Megawati (2023) also considered 30 junior high school students' errors in writing, precisely recount text by focusing on the types and sources of error

nevertheless they were identify the number of burdens and the widespread of errors.

Research Methods

The purpose of this study was to identify the main source of error that seventh grade students made in descriptive writing. Collecting sufficient data is the first important stage for any successful error analysis study. In order to obtain information, 30 participants were involved to compose descriptive texts into the target language. Based on their descriptive texts, the written sentences were the data of the research. The data was first identified by referring to the errors made. The errors were then evaluated and explored to find out the source of error whether interlingual error or intralingual errors. In analyzing the data, error analysis was applied to trace the main source of errors in students' writing. In this regard, error analysis was associated with the mentalist theory. The types of error made by the students were analyzed by using Al-Khresheh's (2010) theory for interlingual errors and Richard's (1974) theory for intralingual errors. The students' interlingual errors were categorized into transfer error, mother tongue interference, and literal translation (Al-Khresheh, 2010), while the students' intralingual error were classified into over-generalization, ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of the rules, and false concept hypothesized (Richard, 1974). Furthermore, investigator triangulation was involved in this existing study by implicating the teacher of English and a lecturer of grammar.

Results and Discussion
Results

The source of error made by students in writing descriptive text among the first- grade at junior high school are interlingual error and intralingual error. Based on the findings, there are 102 cases of interlingual error and 182 cases of intralingual error in students' writing. The errors can be seen in the following subsection.

1. Interlingual Error

Interlingual error consists of transfer error, mother tongue interference, and literal translation. Each type of errors is explored separately in the following discussion.

i. Transfer error

There are some transfer errors found in students' descriptive writing. In this regard, the students' writing adopts Indonesian language mixed with English

language in describing preferred bite as supporting sentence of illustrating a person. Example of transfer errors found:

a. "He **favorit** snack is banana."

One word in that sentence comes from the Indonesian language particularly, "favorit" which is entitled favorite in English. The word favorite refers to a noun that needs a pronoun as the determiner. There are two determiners of the word snack, namely "his" to show possessive pronoun rather than he, and "favorite" that points the soubriquet. So, the correct sentence is "His **favorite** snack is banana."

b. "He's a bit high skinned **sawo** mature."

The depiction of skin color using fruit is common in Indonesian but it is different in English. Sawo is name of a fruit which color is brown. Indonesian commonly uses it with another word (*sawo matang*) as ordinary phrase to describe skin. Hence, the correct sentence is "He's a bit high-skinned **brown** or his skin is **brown**."

c. "Her **favorit** snack is **donat**".

There is the Indonesian language in the sentence, particularly "donut." Donut is often entered as a variation of doughnut in dictionaries. Since it has been used in enough printed sources and gained popularity by companies resembling Dunkin' Donuts, the spelling "doughnut" without the -ough has gained acceptance. In addition, there is the word "favorit" which also uses Indonesian language as has been explained on previous finding. The writing of "favorite" and "donut" in Indonesian is different from English, so the correct sentence is "her **favorite** snack is **donut**."

d. "She like orange **jus**."

In the sentence, there is one Indonesian word, namely, "jus" which the correct writing in English is "juice." So, the correct sentence is "She likes orange **juice**."

ii. Mother Tongue Interference

Students' writings also contain mother tongue interference, the Indonesian language they exploit daily. The interference is also called as language transfer that position as the first factor of interference analysis (Richards, 1984). The examples of mother tongue interference are:

a. "She **live** in Bandungkencur."

The sentence contains the interference of the mother tongue. In the Indonesian language, the usage of the first person or even third person did not affect the verb or predicate of a sentence. Nevertheless, well-formed English sentences considers verb agreement that verb used depends on the

subject. "She" is third-person subject that verb follows must be added –s / -es. So, the correct sentence is "She lives in Bandungkencur."

b. "**He** name Athallah."

The translation from mother tongue language to foreign language (Indonesian language into English language) occurs in the sentence. The subject of the sentence is a boy's name, not the boy. The error contained in the sentence is the use of pronouns in the subject. The correct writing for the sentence is "**His** name is Athallah"

c. "I usually call Koder."

The translation of the sentence is from mother tongue language. In this sentence, an object pronoun should be added. The correct sentence writing is "I usually call **him,** Koder." The object is a boy's name or third singular person that the use of **him** as the object pronoun for a male.

d. "He body is big."

The error contained in the sentence is the use of pronouns in the subject. The pronoun needs refers to a boy's ownership or the possessive pronoun of "he". The subject of the sentence refers to "body" rather than "he". When the subject is "he", the sentence should be "He is big" but it does not illustrate a boy's body. So, the correct sentence is "**His** body is big."

iii. Literal Translation

Sentence writing is directly translated from Indonesian to English through word-for-word translation. Here are examples of literal translation in students' writings.

a. "He not discipline."

The writing of the nominal sentence does not pay attention to proper grammar in English. It is recognized as literal translation. In this sense, the correct sentence is "He is not discipline."

b. "I and also Cinta have big dream's."

The writing of the sentence also does not consider the proper grammar in English. The sentence is directly translated from Indonesian into English. So, the best sentence is "Cinta and I have big dreams."

c. "He has hair straight."

The writing is not wrong in Indonesian. But in English, the adjective should come before the noun. The correct sentence for this error is "He has straight hair".

d. "He like yellow."

The sentence means that he likes yellow color. "He" is third-person subject. Obeying well-formed English sentences, it is necessary to add the letter (s) to the word "like". So, the best sentence is "He **likes** yellow."

2. Intralingual Error

Intralingual error has four categories particularly, over-generalization, ignore of the rule restriction, incomplete application of the rules, and false concept hypothesized.

i. Over-generalization

Over-generalization focuses on omission -s/-es in regular plural, the omission –ed in regular past verb, and additional of -s in regular plural. Below are over-generalization in students' writings:

a. "I don't know why she likes English **lessons** even though the lessons are difficult".

There is an error in writing singular or plural (s/es) particularly omission (s/es) in regular plural. The object (English) is singular. It does not need additional (s). So, the correct writing is "I don't know why she likes English lesson even though the **lesson is** difficult."

b. "Her hobby is **sports**".

This sentence encounters an error in writing singular or plural (s/es) particularly omission (s/es) in regular plural. The subject is singular. It does not need additional (s) in the word "sport". So, the correct sentence is "Her hobby is **sport**".

c. "She has one **sisters**".

There is a slight error in the sentence, even if it is only in one character, but it has an important effect. The word "sisters" in the sentence is wrong. The error lies in addition (s). The error in the sentence is omission (s) in regular plural. So, the correct writing is "She has one **sister**".

d. "He **move** around and he **make** a lot of noise".

In that sentence, there is an error in adding (s) for verb follows the third singular subject. The subject "He" identifies a man, the third individual. It should be added (s) to the verb or additional (s) in regular plural nouns. The verb pursues third singular subject "He" must be added –s or –es for verbs ended with –o, -ch, -s, -sh, -x, -z. So, the correct answer is "He **moves** around and **makes** a lot of noise."

ii. Ignore of Rule Restrictions

Ignore of the rule restrictions contains some parts. They are the use of past form of "be" in present event and the use of past verb in present event. It

explains about the wrong tense that is used by student when writing descriptive text which entails present tense as one of language features. The following are several examples of errors along with descriptions of student errors in their descriptive writing:

a. "I **met** him when I entered school".

There is an incorrect choosing verb. Descriptive text uses simple present tense. Simple present tense uses verb-1. So, the correct sentence is "I **meet** him when I enter school".

b. "He **was** nice".

There is an incorrect use of "be", mainly the form of be. Descriptive text takes simple present tense while "was" is in the form of simple past tense. Simple present tense uses "be" includes is/am/are depend on the subject used. The use of "was" in the present form should be "is". So, the correct sentence is "He **is** nice."

iii. Incomplete Applications of the Rules

Incomplete applications of the rules cover wrong selection of pronoun, the use of the structure, and wrong in spelling. The following is a description of students' writing errors in incomplete applications of the rule:

a. "I share a chair with **his**".

The writing of the sentence is wrong in pronoun. The sentence should use "him" instead of "his". So the correct sentence is "I share a chair with **him**".

b. "Fardan **his** small family."

In this sentence, there is an error in the expression of possession. The word "his" is not the right word to indicate possession. The suitable word is "has" because Fardan is in the third person. So, the correct sentence is "Fardan **has** small family."

 c. "I **has** best friend in my classroom".

There is a slight error in the sentence. The subject of "I" should use "have." So, the correct answer is "I **have** best friend in my classroom."

d. "She **have** three cats in her home."

The error in this sentence lies in the use of have/has. The sentence uses the subject "she". The subject should use "has". So the correct answer is "She **has** three cats in her home."

iv. False Concept Hypothesized

False concepts are conjectured as a result of learners' incorrect interpretation of the differences between target language objects.

a. "My best friend's, Fardan."

In this sentence, the student adds unnecessary items causing an error. In this case, intralingual error occurs due to wrong analogy made by student. The student takes –'s marker for the word "friend's." So, –'s marker in the word "friend's" should be omitted. So, the correct sentence is "My best friend, Fardan."

b. "He his two **brother's**".

In this sentence, the student applies –'s marker for the word "brother's." So, –'s marker in the word "brother's" should be omitted. So, the correct sentence is "He has two **brothers**".

Discussion

Intralingual error and interlingual error are categorized as the source of error made by students in writing descriptive text as proposed by Al-Khresheh (2010) and Richard (1974). Based on Al-Khresheh's theory (2010), interlingual error are categorized into 3 types, particularly transfer error, mother tongue interfence, and literal translation. Based on Richard's theory (1974), intralingual error are categorized into 4 types, particularly overgeneralization, ignorance of the rule restrictions, incomplete applications of the rules, and false concept hypothesized. The results reveal that there are 102 cases of interlingual error and 182 cases of intralingual error found in students' writing. In detail, interligual error consists of 8 transfer error cases, 47 mother tongue interference cases, and 47 literal translation cases. In other words, mother tongue interference and literal translation are viewed as the dominant error existed in students' writing. Furthermore, intralingual error consists of 20 over-generalization cases (7 cases of omission -s/-es regular plural and 13 cases of additional of -s in regular plural), 3 ignorance of the rule restriction cases (1 case of the use of past "be" in present event and 2 cases of the use of past verb in present event), 153 incomplete application of the rules cases (69 cases of wrong selection of pronoun, 36 cases of the use of structure: tense, and 48 cases of wrong in spelling), and 6 false concept hypothesized cases particularly omission of bound morpheme ('s) as possesive marker. In this sense, incomplete applications of the rules is viewed as the dominant error found in students' writing.

Cases of omission -s/-es as one of mother tongue interference in interlingual errors and over-generalization in intralingual errors were found in this recent study as Angguni's (2020) research results in students' omissions of to be. Her study also found the negligence of "be" in present tense, past tense, and future tense as this recent study figured out the students' failure in applying "be" in nominal sentence as one of literal translation in interlingual errors. Angguni (2020) found the students' failure in adding suffix -s/-es in present form verb,

while this recent study found not only the students' flop in adding suffix -s/-es in present form verb or predicate of a sentence, but also in regular plural noun. Thus, adding suffix -s/-es is applied in both plural noun and present form of verb that follows third singular subject. In nominal sentence, the subject applies "is" as "be" for singular subject. Furthermore, applying "be" was also the students' errors found in translating nominal sentences that is recognized as literal translation in interlingual errors. Angguni (2020) also found the students' errors in applying "to be" in the form of present tense, past tense, and future tense.

In summary, the main source of errors found in students' writing is intralingual error particularly, incomplete applications of the rules, with a total of 153 errors. The next error is interlingual error particularly literal translation and mother tongue interference, with a total of 47 errors. In similar vein, the most error made by students is intralingual error (Sari, E., 2015). In addition, the most error type of intralingual error is incomplete applications of the rule. In other word, students encounter many intralingual errors (Pratiwi, 2015). These errors contribute to students' understanding of the language comprehension process. They have difficulties in using the rules of target language, particularly in writing. In fact, writing is viewed as the most difficult skill for L2 learners to master (Renandya, 2002; Richard, 1990; Sari et al., 2021) because it needs quite a long process. Consequently, educator should assist their students in writing the correct sentences by considering the rules of certain target language. Educator should apply certain teaching strategy or learning model to overcome the errors made by their students.

Conclusion

Students encounter various intralingual and interlingual errors in writing text, particularly descriptive text. These errors made by students in writing should be corrected to provide constructive feedback for students. In this sense, interlingual error covers transfer error, mother tongue interference, and literal translation. While, intralingual error covers over-generalization, ignore of the rule restriction, incomplete application of the rules, and false concept hypothesized. The findings highlight that the main source of errors in students' writing are intralingual error, in particular incomplete applications of the rules and interlingual error, in particular literal translation and mother tongue interference. In this case, students need assistance from their teacher to enhance their understanding of the target language rules in writing text. Further studies should explore more about errors made by students in writing by considering students' background knowledge and awareness on English grammar that errors made by the students can be minimalized.

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