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THE ANALYSIS OF INTERLANGUAGE PRODUCED BY 3RD GRADE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN NARRATIVE WRITING TEXT

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Abstract: This research is a descriptive case study concerning interlanguage in EFL students' narrative writing. The study explores the occurrence of interlanguage in students' writing, and the reason(s) why interlanguage exist in their writing. The data of the study are ten narrative texts produced by nine twelfth-year students of a senior high school in Kuningan. The study used a qualitative research design. There was one data collection procedures applied in this study, namely document analysis. The data from students' texts were analyzed on the basis of the concept of interlanguage by Selinker (1972). The results of the study revealed that from the ten texts, the interlnguage appear in forming passive sentence, choosing incorrect verb agreement, choosing wrong auxiliary, making the unparalleled sentence, and translating sentence word by word. For that reason, it is concluded that interlanguage exist due to the strong influence of native language. Therefore, it is suggested that students should be exposed to the use of appropriate English grammar in their writing.
Keywords: *interlanguage, narrative writing, passive sentence*

INTRODUCTION

Recently, many research on SLA focus on the phenomenon of interlanguage produced by L2 learners. The terms interlanguage was firstly defined by Selinker (1972). The terms "interlanguage" refers to the language system of the second language learner, a system distinct from both the native as well as the target language. This concept validates learners' speech, not as a deficit system, that is, a language filed with random errors, but as a system of its own with its own structure (Gass and Selinker, 2001, p. 14). Thus, L2 learners should pass the phase where they speak interlanguage. It means, errors which are caused by L2 learners' interlanguage is not a bad thing, as long as their interlanguage is not stable or it is called as "fossilization".

However, in EFL teaching, the research about interlanguage is also increasing. It is related to the position of English as foreign and second language. Furthermore, English is a compulsory lesson in Indonesia. Therefore Indonesian EFL learners should have the capability to convey the meaning of

a language through oral or written text. This ability can be seen by the method used by the teachers to evaluate and measure the learners' ability in speaking and writing like native.

Yet, no matter how hard the teacher tries to make the students like native, there might be an obstacle which is a gap between L1 or native language with L2 or English as foreign language. This gap is called as interlanguage. Interlanguage occurred perhaps due to some factors. The factors such as There are four previous research which focus on students' interlanguage in EFL teaching context. The first one is conducted by Martinez and Carbera (2002) which concerned on the interlanguage and the different ways teachers manage to make their oral input comprehensible. The participants of their research are five primary school teachers. Moreover, the result of the research is there is cross-linguistic influence in the interlanguage produced by the students.

The second one is conducted by Kil (2003). The focus of the research is

examining three types of errors – word order; inversion; co-occurring articles – produced by five Korean English learners. The conclusion of the research is that the errors they made showed that the learners went through a developmental process. Their acquisition of the target language must be on the continuum of the interlanguage.

The third research is conducted by Fauziati (2009). The focus of this research is finding the errors in English textbooks for Junior high School students. The finding of the research shows that the textbook writers have been most confronted with problems on vocabulary and the writers also have got difficulties in translating Indonesia cultural-bound words into English.

Then the last research is conducted by Luna (2010). This research focuses on interlanguage in undergraduates' academic English. The purpose of this research is to find common linguistic patterns in a simple Spanish university students' written evidence in English. The conclusion of the research is that interlanguage provides a complex, unique and rich linguistic environment from where teachers can withdraw students' weak areas of development in L2.

However, in Indonesia, teachers are required to teach L2 learners by applying genre based approach (GBA). To begin with, genre-based approaches start with the whole text as the unit in focus rather than the sentence. The focus on the whole texts implies that there is higher level of order and patterning in language than just in sentence-grammar at the level of discourse organization and meta-patterning of grammatical features. Genre –based approaches emphasize that this higher order must be attended to for effective language use. The specification of genres to be taught is based on the classification used by many systemic functional linguists, especially in application to classroom teaching of English.

The present research will focus on interlanguage produced by 3rd grade high school students in narrative writing text. The skill of writing, according to Harmer (2007, p. 265), belongs to productive skills where students actually have to produce language themselves. People are thought as literate if they can read and write in certain situations and for certain purposes, some of which are more prestigious than others (Hyland, 2002, p. 53). Somehow, the skill of writing is believed as the most difficult skill for L2 learners. It is because they have to write correctly so that the target readers can easily understand the meaning of the writing.

Writing narrative is the activity of genre writing which focuses on fictional story. In this type of the text, the students are required to have a better imagination to imagine fictional story. The common generic structure of writing is orientation, complication and resolution. Besides generic structure, the grammatical features of writing are also observed in this research.

The study would be started by collecting students' narrative writing. Then the writing papers were analyzed to find the occurrence of students' interlanguage. The focus of the study is the generic structure and the grammatical features of student's narrative writing.

Therefore, it is believed that doing a research on interlanguage especially in students' writing is considered important. Several reasons strengthen the statement. First, because writing is one of the four English skills and teaching four skills of English is the requirement of KTSP curriculum. Second, writing is considered as the hardest skill for L2 learners. The last reason is by knowing students' interlanguage, teacher could find the best method of teaching.

The writer believes that the research on SLA especially on high school students writing is still insufficient. Therefore, by conducting this research, the writer also believes that it can give contribution to the teaching method of EFL. In the other words, the teachers can acquire their students' interlanguage and do not treat the interlanguage as a mistake.

Based on the explanation above, this present research is conducted to answer two questions. The first one is to find the types of errors in students' narrative writing. The second one is to explain how and why those errors occur.

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Finding the types of errors in students' narrative writing will give the teacher a description about students' writing ability. It is hoped that knowing types of error helps the teacher to solve the problem in teaching English as second language. Moreover, besides knowing the types of errors that occurred, it is also important to know how and why those errors occur. The reason is that the teacher can choose the best method to teach English especially writing narrative text.

The present study is begun with the term interlanguage. Interlanguage is a term that refers to the integrated system of knowledge about the target language that the language learners are constructing in their minds (Kil, 2003). It is very similar to the concept of competence in that it is the learners' internalized and systematic knowledge or ability to use the target language to communicate. In fact, it could be considered a kind of competence, however, in the fact that the term interlanguage implies that the internal language system is still unfinished.

Thus, the concept of interlanguage validates learners' speech, not as a deficit system, that is a language filled with random errors, but as a system of their own with their own structure (Gass and Selinker, 2001,p. 14). This system is composed of numerous elements, not the least of which is elements from the Native language to Target language.

Selinker (1977, 1988) has presented a comprehensive discussion on interlanguage which is believed as errors produced by L2 learners. He correlates the issues of the sources of errors with the second language learning process. He has argued that interlanguage is resulted from the learner's attempts to produce the target language norms. There are five process proposed by him: (1) Language transfer, (2) Transfer of training, (3) Strategies of second language learners, (4) Strategies of second language communication, and (5) overgeneralization of the target language linguistic materials.

METHOD

Descriptive qualitative approach is applied in this study. The participants of this study are 10 students of third grade senior high school who have collected the final test of writing. Those students wrote Narrative story based on their imagination. Those students are students of SMAN 2 Kuningan West Java.

The purpose of choosing third grade students of senior high school is because it is assumed that they have a lot of English learning experiences. In addition, after graduating from high school they tend to continue their study or to continue working. Therefore it is important to know how far the interlanguage exist, so the teacher can solve the problem sooner.

The data were collected by applying purposeful sampling strategy to answer both of the research's problems. Patton (1990 in Alwasilah, 2002, p. 146) proposed a qualitative research applying purposefulsampling strategy or criterion-based selection. Purposeful sampling is a strategy to make particular person, settings or events strictly selected to give some important information that other strategy can't (Alwasilah, 2002, p. 146).

The data that had been collected were classified based on the grammatical production and generic structures. The table to classify the data is presented below. After the data classified, then those were analyzed by the errors in order to find out the answer of the research problems. Table 1 below represents how the data are collected in order to get the findings.

Table 1. *Form of data analysis*

Student number	Grammatical Production	Generic Structure
1		
2		
3		
...		
10		

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings of the analysis of interlanguage in L2 narrative writing and hands over the discussions. It focuses on the types of errors in students' narrative writing and how and why those errors occurred. There are ten students' writing were analyzed in this study.

The findings of the study show that there are ten types of errors occurred. Those errors are in passive construction, verb agreement, modality, missing verb, illogical meaning, translating problem, parallelism, sentence structure, missing preposition, and if conditional. Some students did more than one error in their writing.

Those errors influence the development of generic structure of narrative writing. The findings show that there are four generic structure developments that are bothered by the errors. The developments are hanging resolution, complicated story development, incomplete resolution and less development in resolution. Table 2 below clearly stated the interlanguage occurs in students' writing.

Table 2. *Findings of Interlanguage*

Student number	Grammatical Production	Generic Structure
1	Passive construction	Hanging Resolution
2	- Verb agreement - Modality	Story developed in complication
3	Missing verb	Story developed in complication
4	- Illogical meaning - Verb agreement - Wrong auxiliary	Story developed in complication
5		Only three paragraph, no development process in each structure.
6	Translating problem	Story Developed in complication
7	Parallelism	Story Developed in complication
8	- Sentence Structure - Preposition Missing	Incomplete resolution: only one sentence
9	- Verb Missing - If Conditional - Verb agreement	Less development in resolution
10	Verb agreement	Less development in resolution

After analyzing the data, it could be found that there are many grammatical errors found in students' narrative writing. It was found for about nine errors in grammar. For the discussion will be stated below.

1. Passive construction

It is found in student 1 who failed in constructing passive sentence. The sentence is: *The letter wasn't reply.* Grammatically, this kind of construction is not correct.

Constructing passive voice in English should follow this pattern: Subject + to be (past) + past participle or V3. Yet, in this case, the student did not use past participle of "reply" which is "replied".

This can be happened since in their L1, Indonesian, there is no verb difference between active and passive form. However, in English grammar, the construction of the sentence seems like active sentence but meaningless. It should be *The letter wasn't* **replied.**

2. Verb agreement

The example of interlanguage in the form of verb agreement is: *He went to sold.* The problem arises when the student choose "sold" instead of "sell" after the preposition "to". The agreement is "to" should be followed by bare infinitive".

In this example, the student perhaps wanted to be consistent that in writing a

narrative he/ she should use past tense. Yet, the student forgot that the second verb should be in "to infinitive" form. The correct one should be *He went to sell.*

3. *Wrong auxiliary*

It is found that student 4 was not correct in choosing the auxiliary. Actually, it seems like the students was confused about whether it is auxiliary or to be. The detected sentence is: *Zebra did not white color like today.* Perhaps in this case, the student was confused when they should use dummy do in past form and past to-be (was and were).

Based on the rules or agreement, if subject is modified by adjective, the sentence should contain to be after the subject. In this case, to be for past tense are "was and were". Therefore, the right sentence should be: *Zebra was not white color like today.*

4. *Parallelism*

Sentence elements that are similar in function should also be similar in construction. These elements should be in the same grammatical form so that they are parallel, it is called as **parallelism**. Using parallel structure in your writing will help you to avoid redundancy, make your sentence clear and equal. Parallelism is intended to make the reader satisfy.

Moreover, parallelism is important in constructing English sentence. Yet, for L2 learners it is hard to apply, just like what has been found in this study. It is found in student 7 who wrote: *Gara saw the people says that Gara will not kill the dragon.*

The underlined word above indicates the failure of creating sentence in parallel form. In this case, the student is inconsistent with the grammatical feature f narrative. Perhaps in his point of view, it has been sufficient by applying past tense at the beginning.

The sentence should be: *Gara saw the people said that Gara would not kill the dragon.* It should be consistently in past form because the text is narrative. Therefore, it is inferred that besides being

confused of parallelism, the student perhaps is having lee comprehension toward narrative text.

5. *Problem in translating*

Indonesian language has different structure compared to English. Therefore, when we change our idea in Indonesian we will find some obstacles. The obstacles appeared due to the needs of natural translation.

Translating idea word by word is the easiest way yet the most unnatural. It is found in student 6: *The king didn't want this accident to happen anymore.* The underlined phrase shows that in this case, student was influenced by the structure of native language.

From the grammatical analysis, it can be seen that students are still influenced by native language, in here Indonesia. Sometimes they are confused when they have to change the pattern from native language, which already stays in their brain to the pattern of target language.

In terms of generic structure of the text, it was found that students were trying to apply the pattern of narrative given by the teacher. Most of the writings developed in the complication phase. However, perhaps most of them lack of idea how to finish the story. Thus, many stories have hanging resolution. Besides that the general pattern found in the analysis is the use of "*once upon a time*" in the very beginning of the story.

CONCLUSION

From this study, it can be concluded that the students tried to apply what they learned in the class to the writing. The errors they made showed that the learners went through a developmental process. Their acquisition of the target language must be on the continuum of the interlanguage.

Therefore, the teacher cannot treat the errors as something bad. However, the errors can help the teacher to find out the best methodology to teach L2 to the students. The last is that scaffolding is important to guide students in comprehending the L2.

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