

## An Analysis of Students' Errors In Recount Text Writing at The Second Grade Students of SMP Muhammadiyah Bandar Lampung

By

Eka Apriyani, Hery Yufrizal, Gede Eka Putrawan  
English Education Study Program Department of Language and Arts Education  
Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, University of Lampung  
E-mail: [ekaafriyani74@gmail.com](mailto:ekaafriyani74@gmail.com)

### ABSCTRACT

Tujuan penelitian yaitu untuk mencari jenis kesalahan yang terjadi berdasarkan *surface strategy taxonomy* dan *developmental category* yang terdapat pada teks recount siswa. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dan *writing task* sebagai instrumen. Subjek penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas dua SMP Muhammadiyah Bandar Lampung. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan terdapat lima jenis kesalahan berdasarkan *Surface Strategy Taxonomy*: 1) *Addition*, 2) *Misordering*, 3) *Omission*, 4) *Misformation* dan 5) *Blend error*. Selanjutnya, terdapat tiga jenis tingkatan kesalahan yaitu 1) *Pre-systematic Stage*, 2) *Systematic Stage* dan 3) *Post-systematic Stage*. *Blend error* adalah jenis kesalahan yang acapkali dibuat siswa. Tingkatan kesalahan yang acapkali terjadi yaitu, *Systematic Stage*, lalu *Post-systematic Stage* dan *Pre-systematic Stage*. Disarankan untuk para guru Bahasa Inggris untuk member perhatian lebih terhadap kesalahan siswa, dengan memberikan siswa banyak latihan.

The aim of this research was to find out types of errors which are made by the students based on surface strategy taxonomy and developmental category that are found in the students' recount texts. This research was conducted through a descriptive qualitative approach by using a writing task as the research instrument. The subjects of this research were the second grade students of SMP Muhammadiyah Bandar Lampung, in amount 20 students. The result showed there are five types of error based on surface strategy taxonomy: i) addition, ii) misordering, iii) omission, iv) misformation and v) blend errors. Furthermore, there are three types of stages of errors, namely i) Pre-systematic Stage, ii) Systematic Stage and iii) Post-systematic Stage. Blend errors were the most frequently made by the students. This suggests that English teachers need to pay more attention on the students' errors, providing students with a lot of practice.

**Key Words:** *Errors, Recount Text, Surface Strategy Taxonomy and Developmental Category*

## Introduction

In the process of teaching and learning English, writing ability is the most difficult and complicated language skill to be learned almost by the students in every level of education. According to the curriculum in junior high school, students should know five kinds of texts: recount, narrative, procedure, descriptive, and news item. In this research, the writer used recount texts to be analyzed. Actually, writing needs well knowledge and hard thinking when the students produce words, sentences and paragraph. One of the most basic components of good writing is grammar. A grammatically correct text is easier to read. Text writing is the ability of the students to arrange the idea from one paragraph to others and make efforts to connect the idea cohesively and coherently so that is meaningful. Sometimes, many students write a text, but not many of them are able to write the text based on the correct structures and features of the text itself. Therefore, the teachers are expected to be able to guide them when they study to write. Recount text is one of the text genres that the students learn. This text is written with the purpose to inform the readers or people about something that happens in the past. It can be experiences and events.

English grammar is more complicated since in Indonesian language has no grammar like it is in English. Some mistakes are made when students do not understand well about the English grammar. Many of them commonly make grammatical mistakes in their learning especially in writing. But, sometimes the teacher is not aware of the students' mistakes. Then the students make their mistakes repeatedly because they do not have the correction and it is what we call as error. It is important for the teacher to give an error analysis in students' writing. Error analysis is an activity to identify, classify and interpret or describe the errors made by someone in speaking or in writing and it is carried out to obtain information on common difficulties faced by someone in speaking or in writing English sentences. James (1998) stated that Error Analysis is the process of determination the incidence, nature, causes, and consequences of unsuccessful language. Although errors are bad things in learning English, error analysis is advantageous for both students and teachers. For students, error analysis is needed to show them in what aspect in grammar which is difficult for them, to show the errors made by the students, to know the source or the cause of the error and how the students can learn from their mistakes in order that they will not make the same errors repeatedly. And for teachers, it is required to evaluate themselves whether they are successful or not in teaching English.

The researcher reviewed previous researches to find out what have been studied by other researchers. The first research was conducted by Aqilah (2012) entitled "Dulay's Surface Strategy Taxonomy on the Selected Texts of the Bilingual Biology Textbook: A Study of Error Analysis in Translation". The data were collected by using random sampling which means that the data were literally at random. The result show that there were 93 errors found including 31 omission errors, 23 addition errors, 32 misinformation and seven misordering errors. The most frequently error made by the students in the research was misinformation errors with the total number of 32 errors.

Watcharapunyawong (2013) also has done a similar study. He analyzed writing errors caused by the interference of the Thai EFL students, regarded as the first language (L1) in three writing genres; narration, description and comparison/contrast. He found the similarities of errors that the EFL students made in the three writing genres: those were sentence structure, word choice, and comparison structure. Suhono (2016) did a research dealing with the surface strategy taxonomy on the EFL students' composition. This research focused on students' errors analysis based on surface strategy taxonomy. The result shows that there are five types of errors; errors in addition, errors in omission, errors in misordering, errors in misinformation and blend errors, and there were two sources of errors; mother-tounge influence or interlingual errors and intralingual errors. Interlingual errors are the errors that were influenced by native language which interferes with the target language learning. While intralingual errors, caused by the target itself, such as misanalysis (wrong hypothesis), incomplete rule application.

Error is the flawed side of learner speech or writing. They are those parts of conversation or composition that dedicated from some selected norm of mature language performance. Meanwhile, Brown (2000) stated that error as noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker. A mistake refers to a performance error that is either random or a slip of tongue, it is failure to utilize a known system correctly (Brown, 1980). A mistake refers to performance of error that is a random guessing or slip. Mistakes are caused by hesitation, slips of the tongue. The learner, who makes mistakes, will sometimes use one form and sometimes the others.

Brown (1980) insists that it is crucial to make a distinction between mistakes and errors because they are technically two very different phenomena. The concept of intentionality plays an essential role when defining an error since an error arises only when there was no intention to commit one (James, 1998). So an erroneous utterance is that which was made unintentionally, whereas when there is an intention to produce a deviant utterance, we simply call it deviance. A good example of a language deviance is an advertising jingle (James, 1998). The basic distinction between a mistake and an error is also based on the concept of corrigibility. If the learner is able to self-correct after using an incorrect expression or utterance, we are talking about a mistake. On the other hand, when the learner produces an unintentionally deviant utterance and is not able to self-correct, he or she committed an error (James, 1998).

Dulay et al (1982 : 150) states that surface strategy taxonomy highlight the ways surface structures are altered: learners may omit necessary items or add unnecessary ones; they may misform items or misorder them. The errors that belong to the Surface Strategy Taxonomy, namely, omission, addition, misinformation and misordering. Besides, the researcher used James' theory. James (1998) proposes that the learners' erroneous version is different from the presumed target version. This highlights the ways surface structures altered. The errors can be classified into four types: omission, addition, misinformation and

misordering. Then, James adds blend error as the category of surface strategy taxonomy. Developmental category occurs when the learner attempt to build up hypotheses about the target language on the basis of limited experience. In second language performance, a learner often appears inconsistent in his production of errors. This is an indicator that he is going through the learning process and to see the stage on which students commonly produce errors in their process of a learning new language. Corder (1974:25) distinguishes three steps of errors in learning as evidence by the nature of the systematicity of errors

Based on the background, the researcher was interested in conducting research on: An Analysis of Students' Errors in Recount Text Writing at the Second Grade Students of SMP Muhammadiyah Bandar Lampung.

## Methods

This research was conducted through a descriptive qualitative approach by using a writing task as the research instrument. The subjects of this research were the second grade students of SMP Muhammadiyah Bandar Lampung. There are four that classes that consisted of 20-25 students each class. But the researcher only used one class as the sample of the research and the class was selected based on the English teacher's recommendation who said that the students in that class have high ability in English. In collecting the data, the researcher applied the instrument in terms of writing task to elicit students' grammatical errors. In 90 minutes, the students were asked to write a recount text on their last holiday experiences.

## Results and Discussions

The objectives of this research were i) to find out types of errors which are made by the students based on Surface Strategy Taxonomy and Developmental Category that are found in the students' recount text writing, ii) to investigate types of errors that are most and least frequently made by the students in recount texts based on both taxonomies. Surface Strategy Taxonomy was used to analyze the students' errors in term of addition, misordering, omission, misformation and blend error. Developmental Category was used in order to investigate the students' understanding about the errors and how to correct the errors.

**Table 1. Types of Errors in Recount Text Writing based on Surface Strategy Taxonomy**

No.	Types of Errors	Total of Errors	Percentage
1.	Addition	4	2.05%
2.	Misordering	15	7.69%
3.	Omission	71	36.41%
4.	Misformation	17	8.72%
5.	Blend error	88	45.13%
<b>Total</b>		<b>195</b>	<b>100%</b>

The table above shows that there are five types of errors made by the students in recount text writing. The errors are 1) Errors of addition (4 errors items), 2) Errors of misordering (14 errors items), 3) Errors of omission (71 errors items), 4) Errors

of misinformation (17 errors items) and 5) Blend error (88 error items). Blend error (45.13%) is the error which was most frequently made by the students in recount texts based on Surface Strategy Taxonomy. In writing, the error called misspelling. It is caused by the limitation of students' vocabulary and their difficulty in choosing the words appropriately. This case is also because the students write the words based on their background knowledge that "a" in English is read "e", so when the students want to write "went" it became "want".

Besides the taxonomy above, the students' errors were analyzed based on Developmental Category as shown in the table below.

**Table 2. Types of Errors in Recount Text Writing based on Developmental Category**

No.	Types of Errors	Total of Errors	Percentage
1.	Pre-systematic Stage	6	11.76%
2.	Systematic Stage	28	54.90%
3.	Post-systematic Stage	17	33.33%
<b>Total</b>		<b>51</b>	<b>100%</b>

The data derived from the interview's result between the researcher and the students about the recount text writing made by the students. The table shows that frequency of errors identified from the students' recount text writing were distributed in to three stages. Among the three stages of errors, errors in Systematic Stage, 28 items of errors or 54.90%, is the most errors that have done by the students in this stage. The types of errors come after the Systematic Stage is the Post-Systematic Stage. In the Post-Systematic Stage there is 17 items of errors or 33.33%. At last, the item of errors occurred in Pre-Systematic Stage only accumulated as 6 item of errors or 11.76%.

Furthermore, based on the results, it was evident that most of the students had not mastered the use of grammar in their recount text writing. More than a half of all students' recount text writing. They still made more than one type of errors in their error sentences. Blend error is the errors which most frequently made by the students in recount text writing based on Surface Strategy Taxonomy. It is caused by the limitation of students' vocabulary and their difficulty in choosing the words appropriately in order to expressing their ideas in written form. They often misspelled the words and sometimes the wrote the words based on how to pronounce the words.

The data on the table above leads us to assume that the level of seriousness of students' errors should be paid more attention as in the examples mentioned previously. The errors made by the students showed that the students' knowledge of grammar and structure was low and caused the errors. It is line with Suhono's finding (2016) that blend error and omission are the errors that most frequently exist in students' recount text writing. It seems to suggest that it will be more beneficial to learn the tenses and part of speech or grammar and structure that is performed in meaningful communication context that also provides the knowledge of other language components. It can help the students in getting more complete understanding about the language elements being learnt.

However, although the grammar of first language (Indonesian language) differs from the language being learned (English), the errors commonly produced by students in this research did not reflect the first language grammar; when they did not know or acquire well of the rule they should apply their first language structure that allows them to use the same tenses. But they tended to guess the answer based on the general feature they could recognize in their paragraph writing. So they were not likely to use the tenses especially simple past tense and parts of speech that they really did not understand, because they are fully aware that English structure required the change of tenses when its function in sentence changed. It is in line with Watcharapunyawong (2013) who states that writing errors caused by the interference of the Thai EFL students, regarded as the first language (L1) in three writing genres; narration, description and comparison/contrast. He found the similarities of errors that the EFL students made in the three writing genres: those were sentence structure, word choice, and comparison structure. In this case Indonesian language is first language and English is second language.

## **Conclusions**

From those explanation above, we can conclude that there are five types of errors appear in students' recount text writing based on Surface Strategy Taxonomy: 1) Addition, 2) Misordering, 3) Omission, 4) Misformation and 5) Blend error. Blend error is the type of errors which most frequently made by the students in recount text writing based on Surface Strategy Taxonomy and error in addition is the least. The stage which most frequently occurs is Systematic Stage, followed by Post-systematic Stage and Pre-systematic Stage. The errors are common caused by the difference between their first language (Indonesian language) and the target language (English). The students overgeneralized the language structure of Indonesian language and English. Besides, the students often misspelled the words and sometimes they wrote the words based on how to pronounce the words. The errors are made by the students because of the limitation of students' vocabulary, difficult in choosing the words in making a sentence appropriately and also wrong in organizing the sentences.

Referring to the research findings, it is suggested: 1) English teachers might use the findings of this research as a reference to evaluate the weakness and the progress of the students' recount text writing especially and also in English skills commonly, 2) English teachers should not ignore the errors made by the students, it is better if the English teacher could solve this problem such as by giving more practice or re-examination for the students who have not passed the exam, 3) In order to minimize the students' errors, it is suggested to improve the students' knowledge of English grammar by teaching them how to construct good sentences both grammatically and appropriately, and 4) besides, the English teachers should set the first priority of the errors that mostly occurred and should consider that in Indonesian language there is no grammar such as in English. For the next research, it is suggested to find out the way to overcome the errors made by the students. Examining constructs (or variables) that were included in the conceptual

framework but were not focused. Focus on examining the errors based on one taxonomy in different text.

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