

ERROR ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT BASED ON SURFACE STRATEGY TAXONOMY

Nur Choironi, Muhammad Sukirlan, Ujang Suparman
nurchoironi01@gmail.com
English Department, Lampung University

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis tipe kesalahan yang dibuat oleh siswa dalam teks deskriptif berdasarkan *surface strategy taxonomy* dan menemukan tipe kesalahan yang paling sering dibuat oleh siswa. Penelitian ini adalah penelitian kualitatif. Subjek dari penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas XI IPA 1 yang berjumlah 32 siswa. Tugas menulis digunakan sebagai instrumen penelitian. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa siswa membuat empat jenis kesalahan berdasarkan *surface strategy taxonomy* yaitu penambahan, penghilangan, kesalahan bentuk dan kesalahan susunan. Selain itu, kesalahan bentuk adalah tipe kesalahan yang paling sering dibuat oleh siswa. Hal ini menandakan bahwa kemampuan siswa dalam menulis teks deskriptif dalam istilah *surface strategy taxonomy* perlu ditingkatkan.

The aim of this study is to explore the types of errors the students committed in their writing descriptive texts based on surface strategy taxonomy and types of errors most frequently committed by students. This research was qualitative research. The subjects of this research were 32 students of eleven science class. The writing task was administrated as the instrument of the research. The result showed that the students committed four types of surface strategy taxonomy: addition, omission, misformation, and misordering. Misformation was the type of errors the students most frequently committed. This suggests that the students' ability in writing descriptive texts in terms of surface strategy taxonomy needs to be improved.

Keywords: error analysis, descriptive text, surface strategy taxonomy.

INTRODUCTION

Writing is an important skill which must be learnt besides listening, speaking and reading, because it is used to communicate, students must be able to communicate not only in oral form but also in written form. According to Ramli (2013) writing is a way to express feelings, ideas, arguments, willingness and thoughts in the form of words in sentences. It means that students should be able to express their idea in written form as the result of their understanding of the text that they read. Because of that, writing is important skill to be taught to the students.

Even though writing is stated important as explained above, it is still a matter in our education. A study conducted by Diharyono (1990:1) indicated that students known or had the ideas what they were going to write but they did not know how to put them into sentence. Based on pre research, it is found out that most of the students in the second grade of SMAN 1 Pesisir Tengah had difficulties to write. The difficulties occur because they lack practice and exposure from their teacher in English writing text and they lack knowledge about vocabulary and grammar. In fact, they have to master the language skills-including listening, speaking, reading, and writing because the goal of learning English is to use it in spoken and written communication. According to School Based Curriculum, the students at the second grade of senior high school have to master writing skill. The students are expected to be able to write descriptive text. However, many students find difficult to write. They are confused to use the correct grammar. They tend to ignore the grammatical errors so when they write a text in English, they commit many errors in English writing text especially in descriptive text.

Meanwhile, Irfani (1997) in his research found that the students made a large number of errors in syntactical and morphological levels. Generally, the students encountered obstacles in learning the grammatical aspect of the target language, such as in terms of subject verb agreement, the use of preposition and articles, and the exercise of correct tenses. The research showed that the students made 15.13% errors in omission 8.61% errors in addition, 73.59% errors in misformation and 2,67% in misordering. The most frequent type of errors committed by the students was misformation. In addition, Widiatmoko (2011) also found that most of second grade students made misformation (50.31%) and they still committed local errors (88.84%) in their narrative writings.

Considering that there are many errors that students made, it is important for the researcher to analyze their errors and diagnose the difficulties they experience in the classroom. Therefore, the writer uses error analysis to detect the students' errors. It is important because the result of the research contributes in attempting to decrease errors done by the students in learning English especially in SMA Negeri 1 Krui. Error analysis is an activity to identify, classify and interpret or describe the errors made by a person in speaking or in writing and it is carried out to obtain information on common difficulties faced by him or her in speaking or in writing English sentences. Analyzing students' errors serve some benefits, that is: for the teacher, error analysis can tell the teachers how far their students

have progressed to reach the goal, then for the students, error analysis can facilitate them in improving the English mastery.

In this study, the researcher analyzes the students' errors in writing a descriptive text. A descriptive text is a text which says what a person or a thing is like. The purposes of descriptive text are to describe and reveal a particular person, place, or thing. The researcher chooses descriptive text because many students do not understand well how to write this text correctly, especially the content of descriptive text, that is: identification and description.

By considering the explanation above, the writer analyzed the students' errors in writing by asking them to make writing descriptive text. The writer intends to identify what type of errors most frequently committed by students. The writer observed Error Analysis of Students' Writing Descriptive Text Based on Surface Strategy Taxonomy. They had studied English writing especially writing descriptive texts in Senior High School. In this study, the researcher analyzed the errors based on surface strategy taxonomy. This type of errors has interrelationship will one another. Then, the researcher described the errors by following surface strategy taxonomy because it holds much promise for researcher concerned with identifying cognitive processes that underlie the learner's reconstruction of the new language. So, it is very important to know how many type of errors in writing to help them understand writing skill well.

METHODS

This study was a qualitative research which used descriptive design. The participant of this research was the second grade students of SMAN 1 Pesisir Tengah Krui in academic year of 2016/2017. Then, there were only one class which consisted of 32 students. The instrument of this research was writing task. In this research, the learning material was focused on descriptive text.

RESULTS

In students' writing, based on surface strategy taxonomy, the total errors committed by the students were 795 items of errors.

Types of Error the Students committed.

This section answers the first issue dealing with the types of errors the students make in their writing descriptive text based on surface strategy taxonomy. The researcher conducted writing test and analyzed based on Surface Strategy Taxonomy. The researcher asked the students to write a descriptive text based on the topics given. The students chose one of two topics. The topics are: a) My Pet, b) My Hometown. The students chose the topic freely so that it was expected that they were able to express their ideas in their writings. After that, the researcher collected student's writing descriptive text, the researcher saw many students interested to describing a pet than a hometown. This occurred because many

students are easier to describe a pet than a hometown. The result of this test, there are 27 students or 84.37 % chose topic a pet and 5 students or 15.63% chose topic a home town. After giving a writing test, the researcher analyzed the data, and the results are as follows:

Surface Strategy Taxonomy

The data derived from students' descriptive paragraph writings showed that there was different amount of errors occurring in the paragraphs they wrote. The total number and percentage of each type are figured as follows:

Table 1 Students' Error Based on Surface Strategy Taxonomy

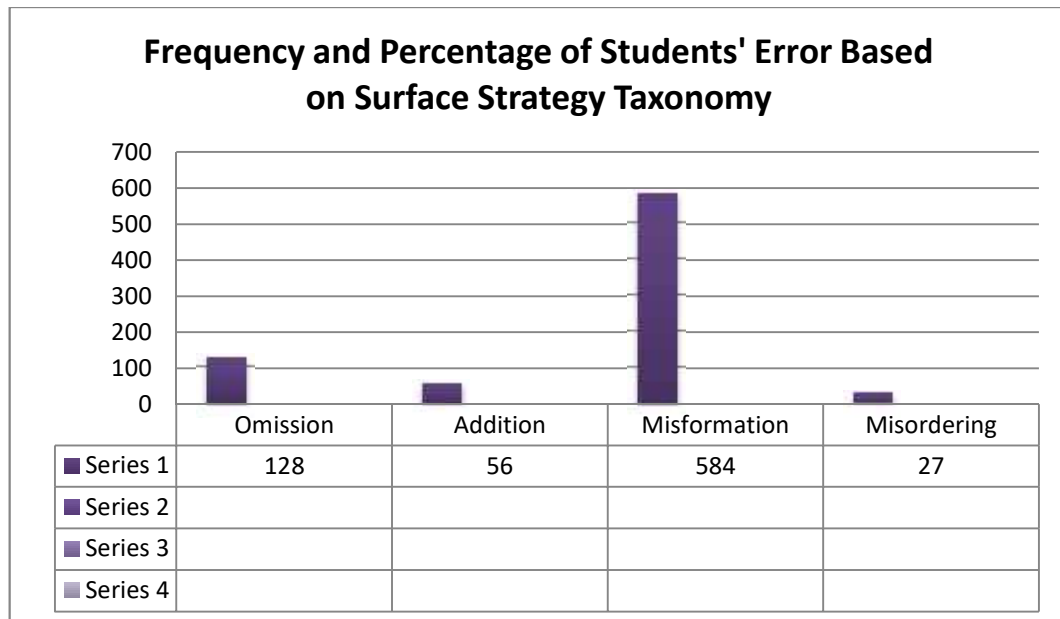
No	Types of errors	Total Errors	Percentage
1.	Omission	128 items of Errors	16,10%
2.	Addition	56 items Errors	7.04%
3.	Misformation	584 items of Errors	73.46%
4.	Misordering	27 items of Errors	3.40%
	Total	795	100 %

Based on Table 1 above, it can be inferred that *misformation* is the highest among the types, reaching 584 items of errors or (73.46%). On the other hand, the number of error in *omission* amounts to 128 items items of errors or (16.10%), the *addition* is 56 items of errors or (7.04%), and *misordering* is only 27 items of errors or (3.40%). So, it can be inferred that based on surface strategy taxonomy, *misformation* is the most errors made by the students in writing descriptive texts.

Type of Errors is the Most Frequently Committed by Students

This section answers the second issue dealing with type of errors the most frequently committed by students. The researcher calculated the type of errors based on the percentage and classified the errors committed by students. Then, the types of errors is discussed here by considering the frequency and percentage of the errors based on surface strategy taxonomy.

Chart 1 Frequency and Percentage of Students' Errors based on Surface Strategy Taxonomy



The diagram shows that the total errors committed in their descriptive text is 795 items, it can be inferred that the highest frequency of errors based on surface strategy taxonomy is *misformation* 584 items of errors or 73.46%. Most students failed to make sentences in present tense. They frequently used inappropriate verbs. The second place is *omission* by accumulating 128 items of errors or 16.10%.

Different from *misformation*, the students' commit errors in terms of part of speech, such as when they forgot to add *to be* as a linking verb in their sentence, or when they forgot to add *to be* as a linking verb in their sentence, or when they forgot to add *-s/es* after a noun to indicate plurals. The third category of error is addition numbering of 56 items of errors or 7.04%. Similar to *omission*, most students' made errors in parts of speech, like when they added *to be* in their sentences eventhough the sentences need verbs other than *to be*. *Misordering* is the type of error with the lowest frequency, it only amounts 27 items of errors or 3.40%.

Based on the data above, the highest students' errors is misformation verb numbering of 584 errors (73.46%), then *omission* of verb numbering of 128 errors (16.10%), *addition* frequency of preposition numbering of 56 errors (7.04%) and *misordering* phrase numbering of 27 errors (3.40%). So the highest error type of students' error based on surface strategy taxonomy is *misformation* verb.

DISCUSSIONS

Based on the result of the research, the students' errors in writing descriptive text can be classified into four types based on surface strategy taxonomy: omission, addition, misformation, and misordering.

Obviously, it can be inferred that the highest frequency of errors in writing descriptive is *misformation* which consists of 584 errors or 73.46%, followed by *omission* which consists of 128 errors or 16.10%, then *addition* is 56 errors or 7.04% and the last is *misordering* which consists of 27 errors or 3.40%

Based on the data in Chart 1, the highest students' errors frequency is *misformation* of verb which consist of 584 errors or 73.46% and the lowest frequency is *misordering* which consist of 27 errors or 3.40%. This result is similar to the previous research on the error in the students writing done by Waway (2013) which shows the highest requeryency of students' errors is *misformation* 46.7% and the lowest is *misordering* 5.14%.. Below is the table of the result based on the research done by the writer and waway.

Table 2 Error Comparison based on writer's research and waway's.

No	Types of Error	Percentage	
		Writer's	Waway's
1	Omission	16.10%	38.65%
2	Addition	7.04%	9.51%
3	Misformation	73.46%	46.7%
4	Misordering	3.40%	5.14%
	Total	100%	100%

In the table above, misformation places at the highest level from the others. It is also similar to Brown's statement (2000:76) that *error* is noticeable from adult grammar or native speaker reflecting the inter language competence of learner. Setiyadi (2006) also states that language learner whose mother tongue has no tenses tend to have more difficulties in learning a target language which has tenses. Since English is a foreign language for them and their L1 (*Bahasa Indonesia*) does not impose such rules of tenses.

The table above depicts that *omission* has placed the second level in both researches, but in the different percentage. In the current research the total number of *omission* is about 16.10%. The third is *addition* which consist of 7.04%. the students committed *addition* because they failed to arrange the correct sentences.

The lowest number of error based on Surface Strategy Taxonomy is *misordering*. The percentage of this type of error is only 3.40%. Takes for the sample, the sentence above “*Krui has a food traditional*”. The word *food traditional* in that sentence is incorrect, since it is wrongly ordered. This error is caused by the influence of Bahasa Indonesia. It is in line with the Ellis (2002:223-236) states that the second language learners may be confused to recognize the use the second language because of their first language’s influences.

From the table above the writer does not tell why the difference of percentage of each type of errors happen in both of result researches, but the writer just wants to see the order of types of errors which is highest, the second, the third, and the lowest percentage. Since the difference of those percentage in both researches do not reveal the one is smarter than the other. So it is not discussed as the main discussion in this chapter.

From the table, it can be inferred that both researches (Choironi’s and Waway’s) have the same order in four types of error. The highest or the first is *misformation*. The *omission* is second place, while *addition* is the third place and *misordering* is the lowest place. It can be inferred that in both research the subjects still did many errors in writing, since they were still developing their knowledge.

CONCLUSIONS

In line with the result of the data, the conclusions can be drawn as follows:

Most students committed all error types of surface strategy taxonomy. The percentage of the errors (ranked from the type of error that is mostly occurred) resulted from the students’ descriptive writing based on surface strategy taxonomy that is *omission* of verb that consist of 128 or 16.10%, the second is *addition* of preposition that consists of 56 or 7.04%, then the third is *misformation* of verb that consists of 584 errors or 73.46%, and the last is *misordering* of phrase that consists of 27 or 3.40%. it can be inferred the highest frequency of errors is *misfomation* which consist 584 errors or 73.46% and the lowest is *omission* which consist 27 or 3.40%.

SUGGESTIONS

In line with the conclusions presented previously, some suggestions are drawn to improve students’ ability in writing descriptive text:

1. English teacher may use information of the types of students’ errors as guidance to evaluate the weakness or progress of students’ ability in learning English, particularly in writing descriptive text. They should take the errors into account, analyze them and provide proper correction. Therefore, the teacher can make a correction of students’ writing errors, then the teacher advisedly gives it back to

- them, so they will know their grammatical errors. The teacher also can ask other students to correct them together to make them active and the capable students can share their knowledge to the others.
2. The teacher can give remedial teaching to the students to develop their mastery in writing skill, for example by giving them exercise or homework until they understand the rule of English grammar. Then they are able to apply it in their writing. Besides that, the teacher must set the first priority to the errors that mostly occur

REFERENCES

- Brown, H. D. (2000). *Principle of language learning and teaching, fourth edition*. New York: Pearson Education.
- Diharyono. (1990). *Teaching writing through story to improve student's writing ability*. Bandar Lampung: FKIP Universitas Lampung (Unpublished Paper).
- Ellis, R. (2002). *Learning to learn English*. Cambridge: University Press.
- Irfani, B. (1997). *Error analysis on students' sentence structure at SMAN 10 Bandarlampung*. Unpublished script: Universitas Lampung.
- Ramli, D. (2013). *An analysis on students' errors in writing recount text*. Unpublished Script: Universitas Tanjungpura Pontianak.
- Setiyadi, B. Ag. (2006). *Teaching English as a foreign language*. Yogyakarta: Graha Ilmu.
- Waway, B. J. (2013). *An analysis of grammatical errors in writing recount texts based on surface strategy taxonomy at the first year of SMA YP UNILA Bandarlampung*. Unpublished Script: Universitas Lampung.
- Widiatmoko, A. (2011). *An analysis of students' grammatical errors in composing narrative paragraph at the second grade of SMA Kartikatama Metro*. Unpublished script: Universitas Lampung.