

AN ANALYSIS OF GRAMMATICAL ERRORS MADE BY THE FIRST YEAR STUDENTS OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENT OF BUNG HATTA UNIVERSITY IN TELLING DAILY ACTIVITIES

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to describe the types of grammatical errors made by the first year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University in telling daily activities orally. The design was descriptive research. The population was the first year students of English Department at Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Bung Hatta University in academic year 2012/2013. The researcher used simple random sampling technique. The total number of sample members was 30 students. The instrument was speaking test in the form of telling daily activities. The result of the data analysis showed that students made grammatical errors in telling daily activities orally. It was proved that 11 students (36.66%) made grammatical errors in using plural form, 7 students (23.33%) made grammatical errors in using pronoun, 16 students (53.33%) made grammatical errors in addition of article, 8 students (26.66%) made grammatical errors in using verb form, 17 students (56.66%) made grammatical errors in using preposition, 24 students (80%) made grammatical errors in using subject verb agreement and 1 student (3.33%) made grammatical errors in using tense. Finally, the students are expected to practice much harder in speaking. Besides, the researcher also gives suggestion to the lecturers to pay more attention to the students' grammatical errors in speaking class. Furthermore, the researcher suggests to the other researchers to find out other forms of grammatical errors made by the students in speaking.

Key words: grammatical errors, telling daily activities, speaking.

Introduction

Richards and Schmidt (2002:180) state that English is an international language and the commonest language in the world that is used for international business, trade, travel, communication, education and etc. As a result, English has become popular in many countries in the world since many

years ago. In Indonesia, English has been a part of subject in education curriculum.

Mastering English will give us many advantages. First, it is easy for us to get a job. As you see in the newspapers, one of the requirements in each advertisement demands us to be able to use English in oral or written. Second, it is easy for us to enter a

university, even abroad universities since they require the students to possess or master English indicated with their score in TOEFL, TOEIC, etc. Third, it enables us to communicate with foreigners. Fourth, it will help students to get scholarship in abroad universities.

There are four language skills that students have to master in learning English. They are listening, speaking, reading and writing. Among the four language skills, speaking is used in oral communication; therefore, one of the indicators of successful in mastering English is by practicing it. In other words, students are expected to be able to speak English fluently and clearly so that it is easy for other people to understand ideas that they are expressed.

Based on the researcher's and her friends' experience at English Department of Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Bung Hatta University, there are some factors that make the students unable to express their ideas orally. First, they have lack of vocabularies and they seldom use them in their speaking. Second, they have lack of knowledge on grammatical rules. Third, they have insufficient practices to use the correct sentence in their speaking. Fourth, they are not able to speak with correct pronunciation, intonation, accuracy,

fluency and good grammar. Last, the factors of mother tongue may influence their speaking.

As it is discussed above, grammatical error is one of the factors blocking someone to be able to speak fluently. Thornbury (1999:4) explains that grammar is the process of making a speaker's or writer's meaning clearly when contextual information is lacking. He also says that baby talks and up to a point is fine, but expressing meanings in simple words are not enough. Harmer (2001:12) also states that if we do not care about grammar rules in producing a language, the communication will be terrible although using good grammar is extremely difficult.

As a matter of fact, the first year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University have learnt Structure I and Speaking I. In structure subject, they learn grammar of English. In speaking subject, they learn how to express ideas, feelings, or to tell something like telling past experience, telling future plan and telling daily activities.

Telling daily activities is one of the materials in speaking subject. It tells about our habits or routine activities every day that happen in present or the action relates to the time of the present moment.

Dulay, Burt and Krashen (in Ting *et al.*, 2010:56; James, 1998:106-111) analyze grammatical errors using the surface structure taxonomy. There are four principal ways of grammatical errors; they are omission, addition, misformation and misordering. First, omission relates to grammatical errors by omitting the elements of grammar. Second, addition relates to grammatical errors by adding certain items which are not applied in grammar. Third, misformation relates to grammatical errors in using the right form of a structure. Fourth, misordering relates to grammatical errors in arranging the sentences in the right order. There are some categories of grammatical errors in omission, addition, misformation and misordering. In **omission**, there are omission of article, omission of preposition, omission of verb form, omission of plural form, omission of pronoun, omission of subject verb agreement, omission of tense. In **addition**, there are addition of article, addition of preposition, addition of verb form, addition of plural form, addition of pronoun, addition of subject verb agreement, addition of tense. In **misformation**, there are misformation of article, misformation of preposition, misformation of verb form, misformation of plural form, misformation of pronoun, misformation of subject verb

agreement, misformation of tense. In **misordering**, there are misordering of article, misordering of preposition, misordering of verb form, misordering of plural form, misordering of pronoun, misordering of subject verb agreement, misordering of tense.

In general, the purpose of this research is to describe the types of grammatical errors made by the first year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University in telling daily activities orally.

The specific, purposes of this research were as follows:

1. To find out the grammatical errors made by the first year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University in the form of omission of plural form in telling daily activities orally.
2. To find out the grammatical errors made by the first year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University in the form of omission of pronoun in telling daily activities orally.
3. To find out the grammatical errors made by the first year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University in the form of addition of article in telling daily activities orally.

4. To find out the grammatical errors made by the first year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University in the form of addition of verb form in telling daily activities orally.
5. To find out the grammatical errors made by the first year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University in the form of formation of preposition in telling daily activities orally.
6. To find out the grammatical errors made by the first year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University in the form of formation of subject verb agreement in telling daily activities orally.
7. To find out the grammatical errors made by the first year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University in the form of ordering of tense in telling daily activities orally.

Research Method

The researcher used descriptive design in this research. The aim of using this design was to describe the types of grammatical errors made by the first year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University in telling daily activities orally. Gay (1987:189) states that descriptive research involves collecting data in order to

test hypotheses or to answer questions concerning the current status of the subject of the study.

Gay (1987:102) says that population is the group to which the researcher would like the results of a study to be generalized. The population of this research was the first year students of English Department of Teacher Training and Education Faculty, Bung Hatta University in academic year 2012/2013. The number of population members was 100 students.

Due to the quite large of population, the researcher took a sample. Sample is a number of individuals selected from a population for a research. The process of selecting sample from population should be preferably done in such a way that the individuals selected represent the larger group from which they are selected. The minimum size of sample for descriptive research is 10% out of the members of the population and 20% may be required for smaller population (Gay, 1987: 101-114). It means more than 20% is better for taking the sample in this research.

In this research, the researcher used simple random sampling technique because there were three classes with different lecturers in the population. Simple random sampling technique is the process of

selecting a sample in such a way that all individuals in the defined population have an equal and independent chance of being selected for the sample (Gay, 1987:104). In other words, everyone has the same probability of being selected as the sample in this research. The number of sample was 30 students.

The instrument of this research was speaking test in the form of telling daily activities. The researcher asked the students to tell their own daily activities. She gave them time around 10 minutes to talk and she used tape recorder or hand phone as media to record the students' oral story while they were telling daily activities.

Before giving the real test, the researcher tried out the test to the students out of the sample in order to know whether the students understand about the instruction that was given or not, and to see whether the time allocation was enough or not.

A test is a method of measuring a person's ability, knowledge, feeling, skill, intelligence or aptitude of an individual or group, and performance in a given domain (Brown, 2004:3; Gay, 1987:127). A good test should be valid and reliable. The researcher used content validity to see the validity of the test. It means that, the test is valid if it fixes with the materials that have

been given to the students. To have content validity, this test was constructed based on curriculum, syllabus and teaching materials of speaking subject used at English Department of The Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Bung Hatta University. To make sure, the test was consulted with the lecturers who taught speaking subjects.

Gay (1987:135) states that reliability is the degree to which a test consistently measures whatever it measures. For the reliability of the test, the researcher used inter-rater technique. Inter-rater technique occurs when two or more assessors yield consistent scores of the same test. It means that there were two assessors applying the same standards in identifying errors of speaking test. The first assessor was the researcher and the criterion of choosing second assessor was she or he should get at least A- for structure and speaking subject. Based on this criterion, the researcher chose Kory Gustian Marindra as the second assessor. The use of two assessors was also needed to minimize the subjectivity of scoring the test. Next, the researcher used Pearson Product Moment formula (The Pearson r) to find the coefficient correlation of the two sets of scores given by the two assessors (Arikunto, 2012:87) as follows:

$$r_{xy} = \frac{n \sum xy - (\sum x) (\sum y)}{\sqrt{\{n \sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2\} \{n \sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2\}}}$$

To find out the types of grammatical errors made by the first year students in telling daily activities orally, the researcher collected the data by doing the following steps:

1. The researcher asked the students to tell their own daily activities.
2. The researcher recorded the students' voice by using tape recorder or phone as media.
3. The researcher wrote down the transcription of students' oral story, then copied and gave the transcription and the recording to the second assessor.
4. The researcher and the second assessor checked the students' grammatical error one by one.
5. The researcher and the second assessor signed the grammatical errors that were found in the transcription by underlying the grammatical errors.
6. The researcher and the second assessor identified the types of grammatical errors made by the students.
7. The researcher rechecked and made the table checklist of grammatical errors made by the students in telling daily activities orally.

In analyzing the data, the researcher analyzed grammatical errors made by the students by using the following steps:

1. The assessors counted each grammatical error made by the students.
2. The researcher counted the average of each grammatical error made by the students.
3. The researcher used the formula below in counting the percentage of grammatical error made by the students:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

4. Finally, the researcher drew the conclusion.

Findings and Discussions

a. Findings

Based on the result of data analysis, the researcher found that 12 students (40%) made errors in telling daily activities orally. In specific, there were 11 students (36.66%) made grammatical errors in omission of plural form, 7 students (23.33%) made grammatical errors in omission of pronoun, 16 students (53.33%) made grammatical errors in addition of article, 8 students (26.66%) made grammatical errors in addition of verb form, 17 students (56.66%) made grammatical errors in formation of preposition, 24 students (80%) made grammatical errors in formation of subject

verb agreement and 1 students (3.33%) made grammatical error in ordering of tense. In order to be clear, it can be seen in Table below:

The Percentage of Number of Students who made Grammatical Errors

No.	The Types of Grammatical Errors	Number of Students	Percentage
	Grammatical errors in general	12	40%
1.	Omission of plural form	11	36.66%
2.	Omission of pronoun	7	23.33%
3.	Addition of Article	16	53.33%
4.	Addition of verb form	8	26.66%
5.	Misformation of preposition	17	56.66%
6.	Misformation of subject verb agreement	24	80%
7.	Misordering of tense	1	3.33%

a. Discussions

1) Grammatical Errors

As it has been stated in the definition of key terms, the researcher gave a main point that grammatical error is all of the errors or mistakes made by the students in the use of grammatical items in telling daily activities orally. Based on the limitation of the problem, the researcher limited the types of grammatical errors into 7 types of

grammatical errors in this research. They were *omission of plural form, omission of pronoun, addition of article, addition of verb form, misformation of preposition, misformation of subject verb agreement, and misordering of tense*. Relying on the findings, it was found that 40% of the total sample members (12 of 30 students) made grammatical errors. This percentage is found by calculating the average percentage of the whole seven types of grammatical errors made by the first year students. It means that less than a half of total number of sample member did grammatical errors and they have problem in using subject verb agreement, preposition and article.

2) The Students' Grammatical Errors in Omission of Plural Form

Based on the findings, it was found that 36.66% of sample members (11 of 30 students) made errors in using plural form. In other word, there were only 11 students out of 30 students made errors in omission of plural form. It indicated that the students have to improve their understanding about the use of plural form in telling daily activities orally. Yet, it was found that 19 students out of 30 students (63.33%) did not make errors or they used correct plural form in telling daily activities orally.

3) The Students' Grammatical Errors in Omission of Pronoun

Based on the findings, it was found that 23.33% of sample members (7 of 30 students) made errors in using pronoun. In other word, there were only 7 students out of 30 students made errors in omission of pronoun. It indicated that the students have no problem in understanding about the use of pronoun in telling daily activities orally. Yet, it was found that 23 students out of 30 students (76.66%) did not make errors or they used correct pronoun in telling daily activities orally. It means that they understand about the use of pronoun.

4) The Students' Grammatical Errors in Addition of Article

Based on the findings, it was found that 53.33% of sample members (16 of 30 students) made errors in using article. In other word, there were 16 students out of 30 students made errors in addition of article. It indicated that the students have problem in understanding about the use of article in telling daily activities orally. In contrast, it was found that 14 students out of 30 students (46.66%) did not make errors or they used correct article in telling daily activities orally. Based on the fact, it indicated that the students had weakness in understanding

about the use of article. It revealed that they were confused to use the correct article or when they should use the article.

5) The Students' Grammatical Errors in Addition of Verb Form

Based on the findings, it was found that 26.66% of sample members (8 of 30 students) made errors in using verb form. In other word, there were only 8 students out of 30 students made errors in addition of verb form. It indicated that the students have no problem in understanding about the use of verb form in telling daily activities orally. Yet, it was found that 22 students out of 30 students (73.33%) did not make errors or they used correct verb form in telling daily activities orally. It means that they understand about the use of verb form.

6) The Students' Grammatical Errors in formation of Preposition

Based on the findings, it was found that 56.66% of sample members (17 of 30 students) made errors in using preposition. In other word, there were 17 students out of 30 students made errors in formation of preposition. It indicated that the students have problem in understanding about the use of preposition in telling daily activities orally. In contrast, it was found that 13

students out of 30 students (43.33%) did not make errors or they used correct preposition in telling daily activities orally. Based on the fact, it indicated that the students had weakness in understanding the use of preposition. It revealed that they were confused to use the correct preposition or when they should use the preposition.

7) The Students' Grammatical Errors in formation of Subject Verb Agreement

Based on the findings, the most grammatical errors made by the students were errors in subject verb agreement. It was shown that 80% of sample members (24 of 30 students) made errors in subject verb agreement. In other word, there were 24 students out of 30 students made errors in formation of subject verb agreement. It indicated that the students have problem in understanding about the use of subject verb agreement in telling daily activities orally. In contrast, it was found that 6 students out of 30 students (20%) did not make errors or they used correct subject verb agreement in telling daily activities orally. Based on the fact, it indicated that the students had weakness in understanding the use of subject verb agreement. It revealed that they did not understand about the use of subject verb agreement.

8) The Students' Grammatical Errors in ordering of Tense

Based on the findings, it was found that 3.33% of sample members (1 of 30 students) made errors in using tense. In other word, there was only 1 student out of 30 students made errors in ordering of tense. It indicated that the students have no problem in understanding about the use of tense in telling daily activities orally. Yet, it was found that 29 students out of 30 students (96.66%) did not make errors or they used correct tense in telling daily activities orally. It means that they understand about the use of tense. The researcher assumed that it happened because the students were asked to tell about daily activities. So, they used simple present tense and they knew how to arrange the sentences correctly.

Conclusions

In line with the result of data analysis and discussion in the previous chapter, the researcher drew some conclusions as the followings;

1. The first year students of English Department of Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Bung Hatta University made grammatical errors in telling daily activities orally. They are *omission of plural form, omission of*

pronoun, addition of article, addition of verb form, misformation of preposition, misformation of subject verb agreement and misordering of tense. Among them, the highest grammatical errors made by the students were misformation of subject verb agreement, followed by misformation of preposition, then addition of article, then omission of plural form, then addition of verb form, then omission of pronoun and the lowest was misordering of tense.

2. Some first year students of English Department of Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Bung Hatta University made grammatical errors in omission of plural form. It was proved by the fact that 11 of 30 students (36.66%) made grammatical errors in omission of plural form.
3. Some first year students of English Department of Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Bung Hatta University made grammatical errors in omission of pronoun. It was proved by the fact that 7 of 30 students (23.33%) made grammatical errors in omission of pronoun.
4. Most first year students of English Department of Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Bung Hatta

University made grammatical errors in addition of article. It was proved by the fact that 16 of 30 students (53.33%) made grammatical errors in addition of article.

5. Some first year students of English Department of Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Bung Hatta University made grammatical errors in addition of verb form. It was proved by the fact that 8 of 30 students (26.66%) made grammatical errors in addition of verb form.
6. Most first year students of English Department of Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Bung Hatta University made grammatical errors in formation of preposition. It was proved by the fact that 17 of 30 students (56.66%) made grammatical errors in formation of preposition.
7. Most first year students of English Department of Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Bung Hatta University made grammatical errors in formation of subject verb agreement. It was proved by the fact that 24 of 30 students (80%) made grammatical errors in formation of subject verb agreement.
8. Few first year students of English Department of Teacher Training and

Education Faculty of Bung Hatta University made grammatical errors in ordering of tense. It was proved by the fact that 1 of 30 students (3.33%) made grammatical errors in ordering of tense.

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