

STUDENTS' ERRORS IN USING SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE IN WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT

Tsurayya Aisya¹⁾, Lailatul Husna¹⁾

English Department, The Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Bung Hatta University

Email: tsurayyaaisya068@gmail.com, elhusna@bunghatta.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This study analyzes students' errors in using the simple present tense in writing descriptive texts at SMAN 1 Baso. Mastery of the simple present tense is essential because it is the basic tense commonly used in descriptive writing. However, preliminary observations showed that many students still struggled with its application. The objective of this research was to identify the types and frequency of errors made by students when applying the simple present tense in writing descriptive texts. The research employed a quantitative method with a random sample of 14 students from class X.2. Data were collected through a writing test, and errors were classified based on surface strategy taxonomy into omission, addition, misordering, and misformation. The findings revealed a total of 52 errors consisting of omission (12 cases or 23.07%), addition (10 cases or 19.23%), misordering (5 cases or 9.63%), and misformation (25 cases or 48.07%). Misformation errors were found to be the most dominant, indicating that students had difficulties in using correct verb forms according to the subject. These results suggest the need for more explicit grammar instruction, especially regarding verb agreement and the use of auxiliary verbs, to help students reduce grammatical errors and improve their writing accuracy.

Keywords: *Error analysis, simple present tense, descriptive text, student writing*

INTRODUCTION

Learning English, especially writing skill is very difficult to be spared from the error. Alfiyani (2013) states that writing is difficult to learn because the writer should involve a process that includes planning, organizing, and revising to present meaning in words or sentences^[1]. Everyone cannot master a language, in this case English language without committing error first. Error is happened because the students or someone make a fault which they do not know the correct item. Brown (2007) stated that error as noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker, reflecting the inter-language competence of learner^[2]. Error is wrong response because the students do not have knowledge about what is right answer is. So, according the theory above the error in this study is the wrong written product that the students do not understand yet the item, whether right or wrong, and they are not able to correct it by themselves.

Errors and mistakes are often considered the same, when in fact they are different. According to Richards (2010), errors are caused by lack of knowledge, while mistakes occur due to factors of

attention, fatigue, or negligence^[3]. Brown (2007) explains that errors are clear deviations from the grammar of adult native speakers, reflecting the learner's interlanguage competence^[4]. Errors cannot be corrected by learners themselves because they do not know what is right, while errors can be realized and corrected if learners think again.

In this context, error analysis becomes important. James (2013) states that error analysis is a process to determine the types, causes, and impacts of errors in language learning^[5]. Learning a foreign language, such as English, is often influenced by the mother tongue, which can cause errors. Therefore, error analysis helps teachers understand the language acquisition process and identify errors that occur, including those that are not only caused by the influence of the mother tongue. Brown (2007) also notes that error analysis is more comprehensive than contrastive analysis, because it identifies various sources of errors, not just those caused by negative transfer from the mother tongue^[6]. Thus, error analysis provides deeper insights into the language learning process and how to overcome errors, especially in grammar learning such as tenses.

Descriptive text consists of descriptions of animals, persons, things, places, etc. This statement is supported by Urunami et al. (2017), who states that descriptive text consists of information about a particular thing. Such as a description of an object through writing^[7]. Basically, it provides information about the subject, the fact, and their behavior. Descriptive is the text describing an object person, animals, thing, and place with clear and detailed explanation. In this case, the readers can visualize an object described. Therefore, the writers will create their feeling and get a clear view of the object described, and the reader can imagine, feel, and have an overview of the subject being read. Furthermore, description activity describes an object to make the readers understand about the object described.

Leo (2021), says simple present tense is a kind of a tense which is used to talk about something general, something that always happen repeatedly or a general truth^[8]. The simple present tense is a kind of a tense that the most often being used in a daily life. Simple present tense also becoming a crucial role in making a descriptive text because it is used as a rule tense of a descriptive text. Whereas, in making the descriptive text, students in Indonesia are still often occurring errors. That's why error analysis is include to the kind of analysis that interested to be analysed and observed what actually errors that made by the students in learning a foreign language and what the cause that they made the error.

Noprianto, (2017), who states one of the text types which uses present tense is descriptive text because the writer describes something still live, and this tense also one of the language characteristics in writing descriptive text^[9]. Thus, there is a connection between simple present tense and descriptive text. Due to the function of simple present tense is not only used for talking about the general truth but also for describing people or things in a common way. As we know, the descriptive text that includes in Indonesia curriculum. It is used to describe something such as a place, person, house, etc and also as the text that includes the specific description of the thing or human being.

The reason why the researcher conducts the research in SMAN 1 Baso, based on the researcher's observation and interview with the English teacher, the researcher found that there were still many students who were still confused and did not even know how to use grammar. The students also did not know what tense to use when writing descriptive text.

When they wrote, there would be found many errors. For example they wrote "I went to school everyday" in the present tense it should be "I go to school everyday" and "My sister eat fried rice" it should be "My sister eats fried rice" and there were still many other errors.

Based on explanation above, the researcher considered to do the research in this school to find whether the student's have many errors in applying the simple present tense into their writing, particularly in writing a descriptive text. Based on the reason above, the researcher is interested in conducting a research entitled " Student's Errors in Using Simple Present Tense in Writing Descriptive Text".

METHOD

In this research, the researcher used quantitative method. According to Creswell (2014), the quantitative research method can be defined as testing theory by examining the relationship between variables measured using research instruments, and the data obtained is analyzed using statistical procedures^[10]. According to Sugiyono (2017), the population is a generalization area consisting of objects or subjects that have certain qualities and characteristics set by researchers to be studied and then draw conclusions^[11]. Therefore, Refnita (2018) states that the population is the larger group to which a researcher hopes to apply the result of his study^[12]. In this case, the population is the total number of students in the research.

The population in this study was the tenth grade students at SMAN 1 Baso. There are 8 classes of tenth grade students at SMAN 1 Baso, whereas the population size is 240 students. In this research, the researcher used cluster random sampling technique to take the sample. Azwar (2015), says cluster random sampling is randomization in groups, not on individual subjects, which means that sample selection is based on clusters^[13]. The researcher chose this technique because the population is in the form of classes or clusters.

Based on a population consisting of 8 classes, namely classes X.E1, X.E2, X.E3, X.E4, X.E5, X.E6, X.E7, X.E8 with a total of 240 students. The use of the cluster random sampling technique is applied by writing the names of the eight classes a piece of paper, then the papers are rolled up and placed in a container, and the result was that class X.2 was selected to be the sample. In this research, the

instrument that researcher use is writing test. The researcher asked students to write a descriptive text.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

After analyzing the data collection; students' errors in using simple present tense in writing descriptive, the purpose of this study were to find out the answer of research questions. Furthermore, the aims of this study were to identify whether the students' make omission errors, addition errors, misordering errors and misinformation errors in using simple present tense in writing descriptive text. In this section, the researcher would classify the errors from the students' writing test into four types (omission, addition, misordering, and misinformation).

The first research question was "Do the students' make omission errors in using simple present tense in writing descriptive text?". Based on the result from the students' writing test, most of students did not use suffix -s or -es when they used third person singular and plural nouns. In this research errors of omission was found 12 (23,07%)

The second research question was "Do the students' make addition errors in using simple present tense in writing descriptive text?". The next error type was addition, where the students used the unwanted items in the sentence. Based on the students' writing products were found that most of students tended to use to-infinitive after using modal auxiliary verb (must and can). Thus, this study was found 10 (19,23%) errors of addition

The third research question was "Do the students make misordering error in using simple present tense in writing descriptive text?". Furthermore, the third error type was misordering. It was defined as the incorrect placement of the words. Based on the result of the students' writing products, there were 5 (9,63%) errors of misordering. Some of them wrote in English, but they used the Indonesian word order. Meant, the students were still familiar with the Indonesian word order.

The last research question was "Do the students' make misinformation error in using simple present tense in writing descriptive text?". Moreover, the fourth error was misinformation. It occurred because the students still confused about the use of subject would influence to be (is, am, and are) and the verb that they used such as auxiliary verb (have and has). Thus, in English the verb depended on the subject, whereas in Indonesian the subject did not change the verb. Therefore the students were difficult

to use the right form of to be (is, am, and are) and auxiliary verb (have and has) based on the subject. This study was found 25 (48,07%) misinformation.

In conclusion, based on analyzing the 14 students' writing test; students' errors in using present tense in writing descriptive text, the researcher found several errors that were made by the X.2 grade students of SMAN 1 Baso. Thus, after analyzing and calculating the errors were found 12 (23,07%) omission, 10 (19,23%) addition, 5 (9,63%) misordering, and 25 (48,07%) misinformation. According to the result, the total of all errors in this study which classified the errors into four categories (omission, addition, misordering and misinformation) were 52 errors. In this section, the research question had been answered through the result of students' writing test.

No	Types of error	Total	%
1	Omission	12	23,07%
2	Addition	10	19,23%
3	Misordering	5	9,63%
4	Misinformation	25	48,07%
	Total	52	100%

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTION

Based on the finding of students' writing test; students' errors in using present tense in writing descriptive text. It showed that students made a total of 52 errors which consist of 12 (23,07%) errors of omission, 10 (19,23%) errors of addition, 5 (9,63%) errors of misordering and 25 (48,07%) errors of misinformation.

Suggestions for teachers focus on Using the Correct Verb Form Since the most common error is misinformation, teachers need to emphasize teaching the verb form that matches the subject, especially adding -s/-es to verbs for singular subjects (he, she, it). Provide gradual practice starting from identifying the subject and verb to constructing correct sentences using the simple present tense.

Suggestions for Students omission: Double-check each sentence you write to ensure no important elements are missing, such as the subject, auxiliary verb, or -s ending. Use a basic grammar checklist (Subject, Verb, Object, Tense). Compare your sentence structure with examples from books or texts that use correct English. Addition, avoid adding unnecessary words or structures by understanding the

function and position of each sentence element. Misordering, use correct English sentence patterns (e.g., S + V + O) and pay attention to word order in questions, negatives, or sentences with adjectives/adverbs. Misformation, use word forms that comply with grammar rules, especially tense and irregular verb forms.

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