



An Analysis of Errors in Writing the Descriptive Text "My Family": A Literacy Study of First Semester Student at Communication Studies Program-Institute of Mpu Kuturan Singaraja

Gusti Ayu Putu Diah Permata Sari AR

Email: diahpermatasari.ar@gmail.com

Institute of Mpu Kuturan Singaraja

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the errors made by first-semester students of the Communication Studies Program at the Institute of Mpu Kuturan Singaraja in writing a descriptive text entitled *My Family*. The type of this research is descriptive qualitative research which explains the error from the student. After collecting the data, the researcher found the types of lexical error, syntactical error, and discourse error based on the students' worksheet. In this research, the researcher collecting the data use elicitation technique which include six steps. After the data are collected, the writer analyzes the data by using following steps namely classifying the error, describing the frequency of errors, describing the dominant type of error, and describing the sources of error. The result of the research showed the dominant error of students is lexical error especially in the wrong spelling. Meanwhile, the source of error divided into two types namely interlingual transfer and intralingual transfer. From a writing literacy perspective, the findings indicate that the students are still developing their ability to produce accurate, coherent, and meaningful descriptive texts in English. The identified lexical, grammatical, and discourse errors affected the clarity and effectiveness of their written communication.

Keyword: descriptive text, literacy, students' error

INTRODUCTION

Teaching English as foreign language is one of major study of Indonesian students. The phenomenon, there are many English Foreign Student is difficult to follow the lesson because of some problems. Grammatical rules still become the most problem of English Foreign Student in writing skill. According to Ellis (1997) stated fossilization of learner's grammar does not occur in first language (L1) acquisition, but is unique in second language (L2) acquisition. There are some differences of L1 and L2 writer include linguistic proficiency and intuition about language, learning experiences and classroom expectations, a sense of audience and writer, preference for ways of organizing texts, writing processes and understanding of text uses as well as the social value of different text types (Silvia, 1993).

In the context of higher education, writing is not only a language skill but also an essential component of literacy. Literacy is commonly understood as the ability to access, understand, evaluate, and produce information through reading and writing in meaningful social contexts. In English language learning, writing literacy enables students to communicate ideas effectively, organize information logically, and construct texts that meet academic and communicative purposes. Therefore, developing writing literacy is an important objective for university students, as it supports both their academic success and their future professional communication skills (Permata,2020, Sari et al, 2021).

In teaching learning process, the teacher often finds student error in writing process. EFL writing is generally shorter, less cohesive and fluent, and contains more errors (Hyland, 2003 and Ferris, 2002). Those error caused from other variables apart from first language interference are generally influenced by overgeneralization and the level of difficulty (Reid, 1993). From a literacy perspective, these writing errors indicate that students are still developing their ability to construct meaningful written texts that conform to the conventions of English. Therefore, teachers should identify students' writing problems and provide appropriate instructional strategies to improve their literacy competence.

Similar to other EFL students, Balinese student experience similar difficulties in writing English sentences correctly. The student had some difficulties in writing a sentence well. Sometimes, they construct sentence by using Indonesian rules, for example “Agus is boygood”. In this sentence the student make error in their sentence. They translate the language form Indonesia language “Agus adalah anak yang baik” become “Agus is boy good”. The correct sentence is “Agus is good boy”. Such examples illustrate that students often experience difficulties in applying English grammar and sentence structure appropriately, which ultimately affects the quality of their writing literacy.

From the example above, error is the most problem of children in learning English, especially in writing skill. According to Corder (1971) error define as the result of some failure of performance. In this case the researcher analyzed the written English error of first-semester students at Communication Studies Program-Institute of Mpu Kuturan Singaraja. It can be seen that interlingual errors and intralingual error are normally found in EFL writing included lexical error, syntactical errors, and discourse error. Besides, the source of error also discussed in this research. Error analysis provides valuable information about learners' language development and helps teachers understand students' learning needs. Within a literacy framework, analyzing students' writing errors also provides insight into how learners develop their ability to produce meaningful written texts and communicate ideas effectively. Therefore, this study analyzes the English writing errors found in descriptive texts entitled *My Family* written by first-semester students at the Communication Studies Program- Institute of Mpu Kuturan Singaraja. The study identifies interlingual and intralingual errors, including lexical, syntactical, and discourse errors, and investigates the sources of these errors. Through this literacy perspective, the findings are expected to contribute to improving students' writing literacy and the quality of English language instruction

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research design to analyze and describe the writing errors made by first-semester students in the Communication Studies Program at the Institute of Mpu Kuturan Singaraja. The researcher selected ten students as the sample for this study. The researcher also chose descriptive text as the topic of the research. The researcher instructed the students to describe about their family. The data are in the form of erroneous sentences and paragraph made by the students. The data showed the error that was made by the students.

Besides, the writer also used elicitation method in this research. There are some steps in this research included, first the writer collected the data in the form of erroneous sentences and paragraph from the composition of descriptive text that made by first semester students at Communication Studies Program-Institute of Mpu Kuturan Singaraja. Second, the writer identifies text product made by the students, then the writer reads and marks the types of error in the students' works. Based on the students work, the writer can find the erroneous sentences and classifies all types of error made by the students. After the data are collected, the writer analyzes the data by using following steps namely classifying the error, describing the frequency of errors, describing the dominant type of error, and describing the sources of error.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

A. FINDING

The researcher described the error which made by first semester in Communication Studies Program-Institute of Mpu Kuturan Singaraja. From a literacy perspective, these errors reflect the students' developing ability to communicate ideas effectively through written English. The researcher divides research finding into 6 steps. They are the type of lexical errors, the type of syntactical errors, the type of discourse errors, the frequency of each type of errors, the dominant type of errors and the sources of error.

a. The type of lexical error

According to Effendy (2014), lexical error show as the most frequently error in written English. This is occurred because of lexical selection consist mainly of content words, which explain the intended message that written by the students. From the students work, the researcher found many error in lexical form especially in wrong spelling and code switching.

Spelling error or misspelling is the miss election of a grapheme to represent a syllable or morpheme in forming part of a word (James, 1998). In this case, the researcher found 30 spelling error of students in writing descriptive text. The error here, for example : "My mother very lucki". Based on those example, the student made wrong spelling in word "lucki".

The other type of lexical error is the use of Indonesian word or code switching. Based on the students' work, the students used Indonesian word to switch cultural bound words which untranslatable. The researcher finds 25 errors. For example: "My father *berasal dari* Lombok". The student made an error in word "*berasal dari*". Such errors demonstrate that students still rely on their first language when they lack the English vocabulary needed to express their ideas. From a literacy perspective, this finding suggests that students' English lexical repertoire is still developing, limiting their ability to produce coherent and fully English descriptive texts.

b. Type of syntactical error

In this research, the data showed that student has syntactical error consist of pronoun, to be, and plural. A pronoun is a part of speech based on grammar. The research found an error in two kinds namely subjective for possessive adjective, for example "*I* school is in Communication Studies Program-Institute of Mpu Kuturan Singaraja". Based on those examples, the student made an error because they wrote pronoun "*I*" has function as a subject in the sentence. And, second error is subjective for objective. For example, "Me have many sister". The students made an error in subject "Me" that appropriate used in object. The researcher found 16 error made by students in the students worksheet.

Besides, students also made an error especially in to be. The types of error categorized as addition of Be in Subject, Omission of Be in Subject and Omission of Be as Predicate. The researcher found 6 error in addition of be in subject for example My mother are nurse in Paramasidhi hospital. The student made an error in to be "are". Meanwhile, the researcher found 4 errors in omission of be in subject. For example: I happy to school in Communication Studies Program-Institute of Mpu Kuturan Singaraja. And, the researcher found 18 error in the use of be as predicate. For example : My sister ___ very smart in the school. The student confused in order to choose to be that appropriate with the sentence.

And the last type of syntactical error is plural. Normally, plural of nouns indicated by the ending -s or -es. The researcher found 10 errors in student worksheet. For example many flower in my house. Based on those examples, the student made an error in omitting word as plural in their sentence.

c. Type of discourse error

Conjunction is one of discourse error on the students' worksheet. In conjunction, the researcher found six errors. For example is "My brother always play football ___ badminton". The student confused how to used conjunction in the sentences. From a literacy perspective, the incorrect use of conjunctions indicates that students still have difficulty organizing ideas

into coherent and cohesive written texts. Conjunctions play an important role in writing literacy because they connect words, phrases, clauses, and sentences, allowing readers to understand the relationships between ideas. Therefore, these errors suggest that the students' discourse literacy is still developing, particularly in producing descriptive texts that are logically organized and easy to understand.

DISCUSSION

In this part, the researcher would present the discussion regarding to the result of study. It is clearly seen that errors are one of the inevitable parts of EFL writing, in which of course, there are many influences over EFL writers when writing in the target language. One of these is the influence by the mother tongue language of the learners and as a result causes interlingual error. On the other hand, frequent errors also result from the process of acquiring the target language called intralingual error which is convincing that the first language transfer is not the only major factor of language error. However, both sorts of errors can provide us with a picture of the linguistic development of a learner and may give us indications as to the learning process (Corder, 1974). The existence of errors has been subject to all language-teaching theories as they represent an important aspect of second language acquisition.

The researcher used elicitation technique including six steps. The first step is the researcher came to the class. Then, asked the students to write a descriptive text about their family. After that the researcher read the student's worksheet. Then, checked the error sentence. Fifth is classifies the data into all types of error. And the last is find the source of error made by students'. Based on the result of the research, there are some errors of student writing namely lexical error, syntactical error, and discourse error. The first type of lexical error is wrong spelling. The data showed that there were 30 error made by students in this error. The example of wrong spelling is "My mother very lucki". In this case the students' using a letter to represent a sound which identical to the sound of the name of that letter. The student applied Indonesian language to understand the word "lucky". The correct sentence from those example became "My mother very lucky"

Second type of lexical error is the use Indonesian Word/ Code Switching. This problem is the big problem of Indonesian students. There are 25 error found in the students' paragraph. The students usually use Indonesian word if they don't know the meaning of Indonesia word in English. Based on student worksheet the example of this error is "My father *berasal dari* Lombok". In this case the student use Indonesian word in the middle of sentence. Besides, the students made an error because the target language that they produce still use Indonesian word. The right sentence is "My father come from Lombok"

Meanwhile, a second error namely syntactical error which is include pronoun, be, and plural. One of example of error in pronoun is "I school is in Communication Studies Program-Institute of Mpu Kuturan Singaraja". From those sentences, student made an error in the word "I". The correct word is using "my" for possessive adjective because the word "my" as subject in the sentence. Second type of syntactical error is be which include error be in Subject, Omission of Be in Subject and Omission of Be as Predicate. The error in addition of be in subject for example "My mother are nurse in Paramasidhi hospital". The student made an error in to be "are". In the case, the student should change the word "are" become "is". There are 6 error found in addition of be in subject. Besides, the researcher also analyzed the error in omission of be in subject. There were 4 error in omission be in subject. The example of this error is "I happy to school in Communication Studies Program-Institute of Mpu Kuturan Singaraja". Based on the example, the error occurs because the students use the Indonesian rule into English in which they omit to be when they write a sentence. The student must add to be "am" after the subject of the sentence. And, the researcher find 18 error in the use of be as predicate. For example "My sister __ very smart in the school". In this case the students

difficulty in order to understand the concept of to be. In those example the student should add to be “is” after the subject.

And the last type of syntactical error is plural. Normally, plural of nouns indicated by the ending –s or –es. The researcher found 10 errors in student worksheet. For example “Many flower in my house”. Based on that example, the students did not understand about the concept of plural. From the sentence, the students should add “s” in the end of word flower. The right words based on that example is “flowers”. From those error the writer also finds the sources of error based of the concept of Second Language Acquisition theory.

In addition, the researcher also found discourse error in student’s writing. In this case, some students were difficult to select appropriate conjunction in their paragraph. Conjunctions are important linguistic elements that help writers establish relationships such as addition, contrast, cause, effect, and sequence. Wibawati (2019) stated that when students omit or incorrectly select conjunctions, the connections between ideas may become unclear. In descriptive writing, although the main purpose is to describe a person, place, or thing, conjunctions are still necessary to connect descriptions and make the text flow logically.

Moreover, the students error categories as intralingual transfer and interlingual transfer. According to Brown (1993), interlingual transfer is the beginning stage of learning a second language are characterized by a goal deal of interlingual transfer from native language or interference. At this stage, learners tend to transfer the linguistic patterns of their native language into the target language. Based on the students' writing, the researcher found that interlingual errors occurred in the use of Indonesian words (code-switching) and in the incorrect use of the verb “be”, particularly in predicate constructions. From a literacy perspective, these errors indicate that students still rely on their first language when expressing ideas in English, limiting their ability to produce accurate and meaningful written texts.

Meanwhile, the intralingual transfer defined as the source of error that is produced by the learner who do not reflect the structure of mother tongue but a generation based on the partial exposure to the target language (Effendy, 2013). The type of intralingual error based on the research such as wrong spelling, pronoun, plural, and discourse error. These findings suggest that the students are still developing their understanding of English language rules and conventions. From the perspective of writing literacy, intralingual errors reflect students' emerging ability to use English independently while still struggling to apply grammatical, lexical, and discourse knowledge accurately. Therefore, identifying both interlingual and intralingual errors provides valuable information about students' literacy development and helps teachers design instructional strategies to improve their English writing literacy.

CONCLUSSION AND SUGGESTION

CONCLUSSION

Writing is one of skill in learning English. The students are expected to write a paragraph based on the concept of English grammar. The real phenomenon, the students’ difficulty to write a paragraph. There are some errors found in students writing including lexical error, syntactical error, and discourse error. Reflecting that phenomenon, the researcher conducted research to analyzing three kinds of error in students writing made by first semester student at Communication Studies Program-Institute of Mpu Kuturan Singaraja. Based on the result, the data showed lexical error especially wrong spelling become the most problem of students in writing English. Besides, the source of error categories into two types namely intralingual transfer and interlingual transfer. In addition, the interlingual error found in the use of Indonesian word or code mixing, and the use of “be” especially in predicate. Meanwhile, the type of intralingual error based on the research such as wrong spelling, pronoun, plural, and discourse error.

From a literacy perspective, these findings indicate that the students' English writing literacy is still developing. Although the students were able to express ideas about their

families, many lexical, grammatical, and discourse errors affected the clarity, accuracy, and coherence of their descriptive texts. Error analysis, therefore, provides valuable information about students' literacy development by identifying the aspects of writing that require improvement. The findings of this study are expected to help English lecturers design more effective instructional strategies to enhance students' writing literacy, particularly in vocabulary development, grammar mastery, and the organization of coherent descriptive texts.

SUGESSTION

There were suggestions for some parties. firstly, for the English lecturer, the result of this research will be used as guide to prepare the material in order to increase the students' error in writing a descriptive text. The result of the research showed that students still made an error in lexical form especially wrong spelling. The teacher can apply the technique or strategy to improve student ability especially in writing skill.

Secondly, for other researcher who interested in doing this research on the same field. This research can be used as guideline for the other researcher. The researcher hoped the further researcher can improve the quality of the research.

And thirdly, for readers, this study is expected to provide a better understanding of students' writing errors, particularly in descriptive texts, from a literacy perspective. By reading this study, readers can gain knowledge about the types and sources of students' writing errors and understand how these errors reflect the development of students' English writing literacy. Furthermore, the findings may raise awareness of the importance of literacy-oriented English instruction in improving students' writing competence.

REFERENCES

- Brown, H.D. (2000). *Principle of Language Learning and Teaching*. New York: Longman.
- Corder, S.P. (1981). *Error and an Interlanguage*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Effendy. (2014). An Error Analysis In Writing Descriptive Text Made By 8th Students Of SMP Islam Kartasura In 2013/2014 Academic Year . Retrieved from http://eprints.ums.ac.id/29950/12/ARTICLE_PUBLICATION.pdf
- Ellis, R. (1997). *Second language acquisition*. New York, Oxford University Press.
- Ferris, D. (2002). *Treatment of error in second language writing*. Michigan, The University of Michigan Press.
- Hyland, K. (2003). *Second language writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511667251>
- James, C. (1998). *Error in language learning and use*. Addison Wesley Longman. NY.
- Reid, J. M. (1993). *Teaching ESL writing*. NJ: Prentice Hall Regents.
- Sari, G. A. P. D. P., AR, I., & Lestari, M. N. D. (2021, November). Student Literacy Trough Balinese Temple Brochures. In *ICHELAC 2021: First International Conference on Humanities, Education, Language and Culture, ICHLAC 2021, 30-31 August 2021, Flores, Indonesia*, pp. 252, European Alliance for Innovation.
- Silva, T. (1993). Toward an understanding of the distinctive nature of L2 writing: The ESL research and its implications. *TESOL Quarterly*, 27, 665-77.
- Permata, A. G. A. P. D. (2020, December). Balinese Folklore Literacy as English Learning Material at Communication Studies, STAHN Mpu Kuturan Singaraja. In *International Joint Conference on Arts and Humanities (IJCAH 2020)*, pp. 105-110, Atlantis Press.
- Wibawati, R. T. (2019). Conjunction error analysis on Indonesian EFL university students' written compositions: A qualitative study. *Edusentris*, 6(1), 45-58