ERRORS IN USING PAST TENSE MADE BY EIGHTH GRADERS
OF MTsN MODEL TRENGGALEK

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ABSTRACT: This research is aimed to describe the errors in using past tense made by eight graders of MTsN Model Trenggalek in writing recount texts. The instruments used for this research were writing tasks, an observation checklist, and interview guide. The data were collected through the students’ writing tasks. The researcher used Surface Strategy Taxonomy by Dulay et al. (1982) to analyze the types of errors and Richards’s (1974) concepts on error analysis to analyze the possible causes of errors. The results of the analysis showed there were 66 errors of the use of past tense in 36 students’ writings.

Keywords: errors, the past tense, writing, recount texts, MTsN Model Trenggalek

Grammatical competence is one of the several competences that students have to master to be proficient in a certain language. In grammar, tenses hold an important point. According to Azar (1999), there are 12 kinds of tenses. They are (a) simple present tense, (b) present continuous tense, (c) present perfect tense, (d) present perfect continuous tense, (e) past tense, (f) past continuous tense, (g) past perfect tense, (h) past perfect continuous, (i) future tense, (j) future continuous tense, (k) future perfect tense, (l) future perfect continuous tense.

Every kind of tenses has their own functions. Past tense is used to describe actions that took place in the past and no longer take place in the present. It does not convey the same sense of continuity or relevance as the present perfect tense. Thus, past tense is important for those who want to talk about the past which has nothing to do with the future.

With regard to the types of texts taught in junior high schools in Indonesia, past tense is an important part of language features of, particularly, recount texts taught to the 8th and 9th graders. However, students still find difficulties in using past tense. The researcher assumes that students in Indonesia commonly make errors in using past tense because there are some differences between Bahasa Indonesia and English when we talk about something in the past. In English, if we want to talk about something in the past, we do not only put the adverb of time, but also change the verbs into the past form. Therefore, we will know whether someone is talking about the past, present or future by knowing the verb he/she uses without looking at the adverbs of time. On the other hand, in Bahasa Indonesia, the only way for us to know whether someone is talking about the past, present or future is by knowing the adverb of time.
Those differences commonly make Indonesian learners have difficulties to distinguish which way they should take to change the infinitive into the past form especially for the 8th graders who are introduced to the past tense. Thus, sometimes, they make errors when they make sentences in a past tense form. In addition, Apte (2004) stated that the simple past tense and the perfective aspects of the verb are two difficult areas for ESL (English as a Second Language) learners all over the world.

Dulay et al. (1982) classified the types of errors based on surface strategy taxonomy. Surface strategy taxonomy emphasizes the way surface structure is changed. In this case, learners may omit essential parts and add inessential ones or they may misform items or misorder them. Based on the surface strategy taxonomy, errors are classified into four types; omission, addition, misformation, and misordering.

1. Omission
   Omission errors are characterized by the absence of an item that must appear in a well-formed utterance.

2. Addition
   As the opposite omission, addition is characterized by the presence of an item which must not appear in a well-formed utterance. There are three kinds of additions in this class; double marking, regularization, and simple addition.

3. Misformation
   Misformation is characterized by the use of the wrong form of the morpheme or structure. There are three types of misformation: regularization, archy, and alternating form.

4. Misordering
   Misordering errors are characterized by the incorrect placement of a morpheme or a group of morphemes in the utterance.

Saadiyah (2009) briefly said that learning L2 is a lifelong process and it is often a challenging experience for L2 learners. It also applies to Indonesian students who learn English as foreign language. As a target language, English has rules which are different from Bahasa Indonesia that makes students commit errors. According to James (1988) cited by Saadiyah (2009) errors in writing, such as, in the use of tenses, prepositions and vocabulary are the most common and frequent type of errors made by learners. The learners usually face difficulties in learning the grammatical aspects of the Target Language (TL), such as in subject-verb agreement, the use of preposition, articles and the use of correct tenses. Amaliyah (2009) stated that students’ difficulties in grammar areas might be caused by interlingual factors like different systems between English and Bahasa Indonesia. Brown (1985) cited by Amaliyah (2009) said that a
learner inevitably makes countless errors in learning the target language.

According to Ancker (2000) as cited by Saadiyah (2009), making mistakes or errors is a natural process of learning and must be considered as part of cognition. Candling (2001: 69) cited by Saadiyah (2009) adds that the L2 learners’ errors are potentially important for the understanding of the processes of Second Language Acquisition (SLA). Moreover, it is understood that learning an L2 is a gradual process, during which mistakes are to be expected in all stages of learning. Ferris (2002) in Saadiyah (2009) stated that mistakes will not disappear simply because they have been pointed out to the learners, contrary to what some language learners and teachers believe.

Richards (1974) argues that many of the learners’ errors happen due to the strategies that they use in language acquisition, especially their L2. The problem includes the reciprocal interference of the target language items; i.e., negative effect of their prior knowledge of their L1 on their absorption of L2. In this situation, error analysis would allow teachers to figure out on what areas to be focused and what kind of attention is needed in an L2 classroom.

Based on the above discussion, the researcher thought it is important to analyze the errors in using past tense to know the errors that the students made so that the teachers, the parents, and others who care about the students can decide what treatment they should give to the students. Amaliyah (2009) stated there is a value in analyzing errors, since this will lead at least to a better understanding of the difficulties that students face, and perhaps will contribute to the development of pedagogical strategies. The errors will reflect the problems that students face, which should help the teachers decide what areas they should pay more attention and emphasize on.

There are many other benefits we can get from analyzing errors. Vahdatinejad (2008) as cited by Saadiyah (2009) said that error analysis can be used to determine what a learner still needs to be taught. It provides the necessary information about what is lacking in his or her competence. He also makes a distinction between errors and lapses (simple mistakes). According to him, lapses are produced even by native speakers, and can be corrected by themselves. They need spot correction rather than remedial, which is needed for errors. In addition, Candling (2001) cited by Saadiyah (2009) considered Error Analysis as “the monitoring and analysis of learner’s language”. He referred to an error as a deviation. Moreover, according to Richards et al., (1996:127) as cited by Nzama (2004), error analysis has been conducted to identify strategies which learners use in language learning, to track the causes of learner’s errors, obtain information on common difficulties in language learning or on how to prepare teaching materials. Similarly, as cited by Nzama (2004), Michaelides (1990:30) states that the systematic analysis of student’s
errors can be of great value to all those concerned, i.e., teachers, students and the researchers. For teachers it can offer a clear and reliable picture of his students’ knowledge of the target language.

According to Corder (1967), error analysis has two objects: one theoretical and the other applied. The theoretical object is to understand what and how a learner learns when he/she studies an L2. The applied object is to enable the learners to learn more efficiently by using the knowledge of his dialect for pedagogical purposes. At the same time, the investigation of errors can serve two purposes, diagnostic (to in-point the problem) and prognostic (to make plans to solve a problem). Corder also said that it is diagnostic because it can tell us the learner's grasp of a language at any given point during the earning process. It is also prognostic because it can tell the teacher to modify learning materials to meet the learners' problems. Sercombe (2000) cited by Amalihah (2009) explained that error analysis serves three purposes, which are to find out the level of language proficiency the learner has reached, to obtain information about common difficulties in language learning, and to find out how people learn a language.

To conduct an error analysis, the researcher is sure that analyzing the students’ writing is the best way. Similarly, Safiah (1978) cited by Saadiyah (2009) said that such errors can be seen clearly in the learners’ written performance.

METHOD

This study focused on identifying the errors of the use of past tense that the 8th graders of MTsN Model Trenggalek made in writing a recount text and the possible causes of the errors. The researcher did not give any treatments to the students; she only described the errors based on the surface strategy taxonomy and the possible causes of the errors.

This research meets the characteristics of the qualitative research design described by Ary et al. (2006). The first characteristic is the natural setting of this study. In this research, the setting that is used by the researcher is in MTsN Model Trenggalek. The second characteristic is the written documents used to gain an understanding of the phenomenon under study. Therefore, the researcher describes the data in the written form. Third, the researcher is the key instrument in collecting and interpreting the data.

The study was conducted in MTsN Model Trenggalek located on Jalan Barat TMP Karangsuko, Trenggalek. The researcher chose MTsN Model Trenggalek as the setting of the study because the school always holds an olympiad every year to select the students to enroll in the MTsN Model. There are some subjects tested, that is, Mathematics, Science, English, and Islamic subjects. Based on the fact, the researcher assumed that MTsN Model Trenggalek has better input in those subjects, one of which is English. Thus, the researcher wanted to know the
errors in using the past tense that students of MTsN Model Trenggalek made.

The subjects of this study were 8th graders of MTsN Model Trenggalek. The researcher chose the 8th graders because they have learned recount texts. There were eleven classes in 8th graders of MTsN Model Trenggalek and each class consists of thirty five students in average. Since there are 11 classes, the researcher chose VIII A class, which had 37 students which is the best class in that school. It consists of students who are smarter than those in the other classes.

The main source of data in this study were recount texts written by students in VIII A of MTsN Model Trenggalek. The students were asked to write recount texts, in about 40 minutes, telling about the best moments in their lives. The theme was chosen by the researcher because she thought that the theme "The best moment in my life" is something that the students always remember. Thus, the researcher hoped by giving the theme, it helped the students to generate ideas and write their sentences. The recount texts were expected to contain the students’ errors of past tense to be the data that the researcher observed. Each student was asked to make one paragraph which consists of at least seven sentences. The researcher thought that seven sentences was the most appropriate number of sentences that students should make in their writing the recount texts with approximately one sentence for introduction, five sentences for the body, and one sentence for the conclusion. There were 36 students who participated in doing the writing task. One student could not participate because the student was absent. The writing task was given on March 2013. The researcher chose the writing task to collect the data because she was sure that analyzing the students’ writing is the best way to conduct an error analysis. It is similar to Safiah (1978), who stated that such errors can be seen in the learners’ writing performance.

There were three research instruments that the researcher used in this study. In addition to the writing task, there were an observation checklist and an interview guide. In this study, the researcher used a checklist to analyze the types of errors and the possible causes of errors. The researcher combined the “Surface Strategy Taxonomy” by Dulay (1982) and Richard (1974) to make a checklist on types of errors and the causes of errors. The checklist helped the researcher to identify and classify the type of errors and to identify the possible causes of errors made by the students. The researcher only used the theory of “Surface Strategy Taxonomy” according to Dulay (1982) to classify the past tense errors which were found in the students’ writing of a recount text. It is based on Dulay (1982) that this taxonomy is useful to prove that the errors are produced by their temporary principles in learning English. Furthermore, the researcher used “Surface Strategy Taxonomy” because this taxonomy focuses on how sentences deviate from the correct ones. The errors occur because the learners have their own system to change the correct structure. This is the form of the checklist.
Table 1. The Form of the Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Sentences</th>
<th>Correction</th>
<th>Types of Error</th>
<th>Causes of Errors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note:
O : Omission       OG : Over Generalization
A : Addition       IRR : Ignorance of Rule Restriction
MF : Misformation  IAR : Incomplete Application of Rules
MO : Misordering   FCH : False Concept hypothesized

The last research instrument is interview guide. The researcher conducted an interview with three of the students who made the past tense errors and the English teacher who teaches the class on March 2013. There was one English teacher who taught the students. The researcher asked the English teacher about how the teacher teaches past tense to the students. The interview with the teacher was conducted before the writing task was given to the students. Furthermore, the researcher also interviewed some of the students who made the past tense errors about the reasons they made the past tense errors. The interview with the students was conducted after the writing task had been done by the students. The interviews helped the researcher to strengthen the analysis of possible causes of errors. The interview data were recorded by taking notes done by the researcher.

The researcher analyzed the data qualitatively through the following steps. First, the researcher underlined the sentences which contain errors in the use of past tense. After that, the researcher put the sentences into the checklist table. The errors made by the students were classified into their types based on the Surface Strategy Taxonomy proposed by Dulay et al. (1982). Surface Strategy Taxonomy categorized errors into errors of omission, addition, misordering, and misformation. In order to make it easier for the researcher to classify the types of errors, the researcher provided the correction. Then, the researcher classified the errors into their types: omission, addition, misordering, and misformation. In this step, the researcher also predicted the possible causes of error that the students made. The causes were first analyzed and categorized into over generalization, ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of rules, and false concept hypothesis. Then, the results of the analysis were triangulated by the data from the teacher and students’ interviews. The last step in the data analysis was tabulating the errors. It was done to determine the frequency of occurrence of the errors in each category and to figure out the most and the less difficult grammatical items for the students to understand and use. The higher percentage indicates the more difficult the grammar item for the students.
FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In the data analysis, the researcher just analyzed the errors of the use of past tense while the other errors were ignored. The researcher analyzed the types of errors by using the surface taxonomy strategy proposed by Dulay et al. (1982). Since the research focused on the use of past tense, there was no error of misordering found here. It is because error of misordering does not exist in the use of past tense. Moreover, error of misordering usually deals with a phrase while this research only focuses on the use of past tense.

Types of Errors Found

The results from the analysis stated that there are 66 errors in the use of past tense found in 36 pieces of students’ writings. There are 75.75% errors of misformation, 16.66% errors of omission; 7.57% errors of addition; and 0% errors of misordering.

a. Misformation Errors

This kind of error is indicated by the use of wrong form or morpheme or structure. There are three types of this class: regularization, archy form, and alternating form. There are 75.75% of misformation errors found in this research. The researcher found one kind of error of misformation in the analysis. It was an error of alternating form.

b. Omission Errors

The researcher found two kinds of errors of omission in the analysis. There are omission of be and omission of past participle. There are 16.66% of omission errors found in this research.

c. Addition Errors

Addition errors are the opposite of omissions. This kind of error is characterized by the presence of an item which is unnecessary or must not appear in well-formed sentences. There are three kinds in this class: double marking, regularization, and simple addition. There is 7.57% of addition errors found in this research. The researcher found two kinds of errors of addition in the analysis. They were double marking and regularization.

d. Misordering Errors

Misordering errors are characterized by the incorrect placement of a morpheme or a group of morphemes in an utterance. As stated before, since the research focuses on the use of past tense, there is no error of misordering found here. It is because error of misordering does not exist in the use of past tense. Moreover, error of misordering usually deals with a phrase.

Causes of the Errors

According to Richards (1974), there are some factors that cause errors. They are
overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restriction, incomplete application of rule, and false concept hypothesized. The results from the analysis showed that from 66 errors there are 68.8% errors caused by ignorance of rule restriction, 21.21% incomplete application of rules, 7.54% false concept hypothesized, and 3.03% over generalization.

a. Ignorance of Rule Restriction

Ignorance of rule restriction happens when the learners do not apply the application of rule to the context because the learners fail to observe the restriction of existing structures. There is 68.18% ignorance of rule restriction found in this research.

b. Incomplete Application of Rule

Incomplete application of rule happens when the learners’ errors are derived from the faulty comprehension of distinction in the target language. There are 21.21% of misformation errors found in this research.

c. False Concept Hypothesized

False concept hypothesized happens when the learners fail to develop the rules to make an acceptable utterance. There is 7.54% false concept hypothesized found in this research.

d. Overgeneralization

Overgeneralization happens when the learners create a deviant structure on the basis of their experience of other structures in the target language. In other words, the learners generalize the rules to create other sentences. There is 3.03% overgeneralization found in this research.

Discussion on the Types of Errors

a. Misformation

There are about 49 errors (75.75%) of misformation found in the recount texts made by the students. According to Dulay et al. (1982), in misformation errors, the learners supply something, but it is not correct. These kinds of errors are indicated by the use of wrong form or morpheme or structure. There are three types of this class: regularization, archy form, alternating form.

Based on the data analysis, the researcher found one kind of misformation errors, that is, alternating form. Dulay et al. (1982) stated that errors of alternating form occur when the learners put a morpheme or a group of morphemes in incorrect order. As Dulay et al. (1982) stated that misformations indicate that some learning has transpired and that barring certain attitudes or environmental circumstances, the learner is on his or her way to acquire target language proficiency. Brown (2007) stated that there are four sources of errors, that is, interlingual transfer, intralingual transfer, context of learning, and communication strategy. In this research, this type
of error belongs to context of learning. The error occurs because the students may mislead explanation from the teacher or because of the pattern that was rotely memorized in a drill but improperly contextualized. The researcher takes an example from the data collected: “Last year, I join a competition.” Based on the sentence, the student put the verb “join” in the wrong form. It should be the past form of the word “join” because the adverb of time is “last year” which means the event is already done. Thus, the sentence should be “Last year, I joined a competition”.

b. Errors of Omission

There are about 11 errors (16.66%) of omission found in the recount texts made by the students. According to Dulay et al. (1982), this kind of errors occurs when the learners omit or delete some required elements from their sentence(s). The learners omit item(s) which is/are necessary for their utterances to be considered grammatically correct.

Dulay et al. (1982) stated that during the early stages of second language acquisition, errors of omission are found in a greater abundance and across a greater variety of morphemes. In the intermediate stages, when the learners have been exposed to more languages, other types of errors are more likely to occur.

In the analysis of the results, the error of omission is at the second rank in terms of frequency. The students might already know how to express their ideas to make their recount texts. However, the students still lack knowledge of the target language’s structure rules. Therefore, it makes them omit certain items which are unnecessary in their language but necessary in the target language.

Based on the analysis, there are two kinds of errors of omission found by the researcher. They are errors of omission of be and omission of the past verbs. To make it clear, here is an example of error of omission of be that the researcher picks from the data: in Bahasa the sentence is “Aku benar-benar senang”. The students translated it word to word and it becomes “I really happy”. The sentence is grammatically wrong because there is no be in the sentence. The sentence should be “I was really happy”. The be should be was because the student tells about his/her experience which was done in the past. Moreover, here is the example of error of omission of past verbs: “We just recreation in Prigi beach”. The sentence is also grammatically wrong because there is no be or a past verb in the sentence. To make the sentence grammatically correct and sensible, a verb has to be added, so that the correct sentence would be like this: “We just had a recreation in Prigi beach”.

The source of those kinds of errors is interlingual transfer. According to Brown (2007), in interlingual transfer, errors are made as the result of transferring the language from the native language. In those kinds of errors, the students translate the sentences from Bahasa Indonesia to
English word to word. Thus, there were some grammatical errors in the sentences.

c. Errors of Addition

There are six errors of addition (7.57%) found in the recount texts made by the students. Addition error is the opposite of omission. According to Dulay et al. (1982), this kind of error is characterized by the presence of an item which is unnecessary or must not appear in well-formed sentences. There are three kinds in this class: double marking, regularization, and simple addition. Based on the data analysis, the researcher found two kinds of addition errors: double marking and regularization. Double marking error, according to Dulay et al. (1982) occurs when the learners give more than one marking in constructing the utterance or sentence. The regularization error occurs when the learners regularize the change of words.

In this research, the double marking errors happened when the students put the linking verb be and the auxiliary for the past tense in one sentence. For example: “My uncle’s car is didn’t work.” The sentence is grammatically wrong because the sentence already has the auxiliary for the past tense so it does not need the linking verb be. According to Brown (2007), the source of this kind of error is context learning. The students memorized the pattern in a drill but improperly contextualized.

In the error of regularization, the students regularize the irregular verbs. Based on Brown (2007), the source of this kind of errors is intralingual transfer because the students regularize the irregular verbs into regular verbs. Here is an example from the data: “I slepted at the car”. In the sentence, the students regularize the irregular verb “sleep” to be “slepped”. The word should be “slept” because it is an irregular verb. Thus, the sentence should be “I slept in the car”.

d. Misordering

Based on Dulay et al. (1982), errors of misordering are characterized by the incorrect placement of a morpheme or a group of morphemes in an utterance. In this research, there is no error of misordering in using the past tense. It is because errors of misordering does not exist in the use of the past tense. Moreover, error of misordering usually deals with a phrase.

**Discussion on the Causes of the Errors**

a. Ignorance of Rule Restriction

Ignorance of rule restriction is found to be the cause of 68.18% of errors in the recount texts made by the students. Ignorance of rule restriction happens when the learners do not apply the rules appropriately because the learners fail to observe the restriction of existing structures.

Based on the analysis, the researcher found that the ignorance of rule restriction happened because the students did not understand the structure of the past tense. The following sentence is
an example that the researcher took from the data: “When I celebrate my birthday.” The sentence is grammatically wrong because the instruction that the researcher gave to the students is to make a recount text about the best moment in their life so that the sentences should be in the past form. Thus, the correct sentence is “When I celebrated my birthday.”

Another example is “After the test was finish.” The sentence is grammatically wrong because according to the pattern of the past tense, the thing after be should not be a verb. In order to make the sentence grammatically correct, the verb “finish” should be changed into an adjective, that is, “finished”. Thus, the correct sentence is “After the test was finished.”

There are four sources of errors according to Brown (2007). They are interlingual transfer, intralingual transfer, context of learning, and communication strategy. Based on the analysis, those examples belong to context of learning, in this example, the students seem to memorize the pattern of past tense, but could not contextualize properly.

b. Incomplete Application of Rule

The incomplete application of rule is found in about 21.21% of the recount texts made by the students. According to Richards (1974), incomplete application of rule happens when the learners’ errors derive from the faulty comprehension of distinction in the target language. Based on the analysis, the researcher found that the students wrongly understand the rule of the target language. The following sentence is the sample of incomplete application of rule that the researcher took from the data: “It my new experience.” It seemed that the student did not know that the sentence needs the linking verb be (was) to make the sentence accurate. The sentence should be “It was my new experience.” Based on Brown (2007), the source of this error is interlingual transfer because the students seemed to transfer the language from their native language that is Bahasa Indonesia. Another example is the sentence “I was very liked it.” The sentence is grammatically wrong because the students put the be (was) in the sentence while there was already a verb liked. The student did not know that the sentence does not use the proper pattern of past tense.

c. False Concept Hypothesized

Based on the analysis, the false concept hypothesized is found to be the cause of about 7.57% of errors in the recount texts made by the students. False concept hypothesized happens when the learners fail to develop the rules to make an acceptable utterance. Here is an example from the data: “I acceptance in MTs.” The source of the error in this sentence is context of learning. It is because this sentence is unacceptable and grammatically wrong since the word “acceptance” is a “noun”. The noun “acceptance” should be changed into a verb, that is, “accept”. It should also be in the past form. Furthermore, based on the context, to make the
sentence sensible and acceptable, the sentence should be in the form of past passive voice, thus, the sentence should be “I was accepted in MTs.” Another example is the sentence “Although this beach interesting looser with other beaches”. This sentence is grammatically wrong. Besides, it is also difficult for the readers to understand the sentence. Thus, he source of the error in this sentence is communication strategy. The student seems to have difficulties in delivering their ideas.

d. Overgeneralization

Overgeneralization is found in about 3.03% of the recount texts made by the students. Overgeneralisation happens when the learners create a deviant structure on the basis of their experience of other structures in the target language. In other words, the learners generalize certain rules to create other sentences.

Based on the analysis, overgeneralization occurs when the students regularize the irregular verb. Here is an example from the data: “We falled apart.” In the sentence, the student regularized the irregular verb “fall” to become “falled.” The word should be “fell” because it is an irregular verb. Thus, the sentence should be “We fell apart”. Another example is the sentence “I sleepe at the car”. In the sentence, the student also regularizes the irregular verb “sleep” by adding -ed/, so it becomes “sleeped”. The past form of the verb “sleep” is “slept” since it is an irregular verb. Thus, the correct sentence should be “I slept in the car”. Those two examples have the same source of errors, that is, intralingual transfer because the students overgeneralize the irregular verbs into regular verbs.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions

Based on the analysis, the researcher found 66 errors in the use of past tense made by the 8th graders of MTsN Model Trenggalek. The types of errors that the researcher found in this research are errors of misformation, errors of omission, and errors of addition. There are two kinds of errors of omission. They consist of omission of be and omission of verbs in the past form. The frequency of errors of omission is 16.66%. It is the second highest frequency in the analysis. There are also two kinds of errors of addition in the analysis, that is, double marking and regularization. The frequency of errors of addition is 7.57%. It is the third highest frequency in the analysis. There is one kind of errors of misformation found in the analysis, that is, alternating form. Errors of misformation has the highest frequency of occurrence, that is, 75.75%.

The possible causes of errors that the researcher found in this research are overgeneralisation, ignorance of rule restriction, incomplete application of rules, and false
concept hypothesized. Overgeneralization is found in about 3.03% of the recount texts made by the students. Based on the analysis, over generalization occurs when the students regularize the irregular verbs. Ignorance of rule restriction is found to be the cause of about 68.18% of the errors in the recount texts made by the students. Based on the analysis, the researcher found that ignorance of rule restriction happens because the students do not understand the structure of the past tense. Incomplete application of rules is found in about 21.21% of the recount texts made by the students. False concept hypothesized is found in about 7.57% of the recount texts made by the students. It happened when the learners failed to develop the rules to make acceptable utterances.

Suggestions

Based on the analysis, the researcher would like to offer suggestions to the students, the teachers, and the future researchers to improve the students’ ability in writing recount text. Firstly, to improve the students’ ability in writing recount texts, some suggestions are addressed to the teachers. Firstly, clearer explanation about the different rules between Bahasa Indonesia and English should be given by the teachers so that the students understand how to write in English especially in writing the recount texts. Then, the teachers need to find out the students’ ability in using the past tense, so that they could know what the students lack and how to improve that. Next, the teacher should give the students exercises in writing recount text to make them more accustomed to writing in English especially in writing recount texts. Lastly, the past tense with any written exercises should be integrated, so that the students not only learn the patterns of the past tense but also practice to use of the past tense rules.

Secondly, to improve the ability in writing the recount texts, a suggestion is addressed to the students. The students should ask the teachers if they encounter any difficulties in their studies. Thus, the teacher could know what the students need in order to improve their ability in writing recount texts.

Lastly, a suggestion is also given to future researchers. It is recommended that they conduct a research which aims to analyze errors in using the other kinds of tenses.

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