

ANALYZING ERRORS MADE BY THE GRADE VIII STUDENTS IN WRITING RECOUNT TEXT

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Abstract

The objective of this research was to identify and to analyze kinds of grammatical errors made by the eighth grade students in their recount text and also to find out the reasons why the errors occurred. The design of this research was descriptive research design. The population of this research was the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Parigi and the number of the sample was 28 students. The researcher used three instruments. They were observation checklist, test, and questionnaire. The result of this research indicated that the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Parigi had poor ability in writing recount text. The highest percentage errors was made in subject-verb agreement by 89.2%, the second was spelling and punctuation by 85.7%, the third was simple past tense by 78%, the fourth was preposition by 67.8 %, and the last errors was pronoun by 28.5%. The main sources of those errors were interlingual errors and induced errors.

Keywords: Analyzing; Errors; Recount Text

INTRODUCTION

Writing skill can be defined as a skill of language which is very complex. Writing is a process of expressing ideas, feelings, and thoughts of the writers in written symbol to communicate with readers. Mukminatien in Waris (2011:20) states, "Writing is an activity of expressing ideas and feelings by using written language as its medium of communication". This sentence means that writing is a process to express writer's mind, feel, and thinking about anything in written form to communicate with other people as the readers.

Based on the curriculum of Junior High School (KTSP:2006), there are three types of text which are taught in the eighth grade students of junior high school. They are descriptive, recount and narrative. Recount text is taught twice in Junior High School (KTSP:2006). This text is first introduced in the first semester. Then, it is taught again in the second semester. Recount text is a text which re-telling to the readers about event or story in the past. Gerot and Wignell (1994:194) define, "Recount text is a text that retells

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events for the purpose of informing or entertaining”, while Cogan in Sari (2013:75) confirms, “Recount text is written to retell events with the aim of either to inform or entertain their readers”. Based on the quotations, the students are expected to express their idea or to think about their experiences in the past to inform the readers.

Since recount text tells about past events or experiences, it uses past tense. It is similar to narrative text which also uses past tense to describe an action or event happened, but there is a difference between recount and narrative text. According to Watkins (2005:223), “Recount is the simplest text type in the genre of narrating”. This statement is supported by Pardiyono (2007:63) who states, “There is no complication among the participants and that make it simpler and different from narrative”. Both of the explanations above mean that recount text is simpler than narrative. Furthermore, recount text retells about stories or events in the past that have been proved, while narrative text also retells about story that happened in the past but has not been proved yet.

In recount text, the students should know the social function, the generic structure and the language feature of recount text. Anderson and Anderson (2003:50) assert, “The students should be aware in using the schematic structure of recount text including orientation, record of events, and reorientation”. This sentence means that students have to understand well about the generic structure of recount text which consists of orientation, events, and reorientation. In orientation, the students should introduce the participant involved in the event which they want to write. Then, details of the happening will be written in event. Last, re-orientation will restate the opinion or comment of the writer. Moreover, Gerot and Wignel (1995) assert, “The linguistics features of recount text including specific participants, circumstance of time and place, first person, additional conjunction, material process, and past tense”. This assumption clearly explains that recount text has language features which begin by telling who was involved, what happened, where this event took place and when it happened in past tense form.

However, most of the eighth grade students do not apply the rule in making recount text. Therefore, sometimes they still made errors in some area of grammar. Error refers to fault that was made by the students who had lack performance and knowledge about something. Norrish (1983:7) states, “An error is a systematic deviation, with learners have not learnt something well and consistently ‘get it wrong’”. Meanwhile, Corder (1981:10) associates, “Error with failure in competence”. These quotations mean that error is a failure which always happened in the same situation because the students have a lack of knowledge,

performance, or competence about the rule or system of language and also less of practice to write.

In contrary, a mistake is different from an error. A mistake is made by students because of carelessness and inconsistency. It means that the use of language in sentences sometimes true and sometimes false. Richard et al. (1973:95) states, "Mistake is made by learners when writing or speaking which is caused of lack attention, fatigue, carelessness, or other aspects of performance". Referring to this definition, it can be assumed that a mistake is created by students since they do not apply the rule that they know.

The research was conducted at SMP Negeri 2 Parigi especially to the eighth grade students. In that school, students did not know how to organize their ideas in written form. They also did not master constructing grammatical sentences. Another problem is that the students had a lack of confidence to write. It was difficult for them to choose and to find appropriate words. It made them felt worry in developing their idea when they were asked to write a short paragraph in blank paper by the teacher.

The researcher concerned with students' writing skill in recount text, the problem statement was formulated in following questions: 1) *what kinds of grammatical errors made by the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Parigi in writing recount text* and 2) *why these errors occurred?* It was to identify and to analyze the grammatical errors in recount text and to find out the reasons why the errors occurred.

METHODOLOGY

The design of this research was descriptive research. The purposes of descriptive research are to identify, to analyze, and to describe the data descriptively. This research describes the kinds of grammatical errors made by the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Parigi in writing recount text as objective as possible. Every research has population and sample. In this research, the researcher chose the eighth grade students in SMP Negeri 2 Parigi as the population. It consisted of eight parallel classes from VIIIA up to VIII G with the total number of 205 students in academic year of 2013-2014. The sampling technique used in this research was random sampling technique. The number of sample was 25 students. Gay (1996:111) defines, "Sampling is the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that individuals represent the larger group from which they were selected".

In conducting this research, the researcher used observation checklist, test, and questionnaire. Observation checklist was used as the supporting instrument in this research

before taking the result of the test. Test given by the researcher contained the topic which related to students' experiences. It was used to measure students' ability in writing recount text. The questionnaire was given to the students to get additional information and data related to the students' problem in recount text.

Before collecting the data, the researcher observed the situation and the condition of the class. Besides, she observed how the teacher taught English to the students. Additionally, she looked at students' reaction in teaching learning process.

After conducting the observation, the researcher distributed the test to the sample after giving a brief explanation about recount text to refresh their mind. In this test, students chose a topic. It contained two topics which related to students' daily activities. Then they were given the direction to write down on the paper.

In this research, questionnaire was used to get additional information related to students' knowledge in writing the recount text. The questionnaire consisting of ten questions and the form of questions was multiple choice which consisted of three options in each question. Referring to the steps of error analysis method from Corder in Ellis (1994), the data were analyzed as follows:

- 1) The researcher studied the acquire data and found out the grammatical errors by underlining the errors.
- 2) The researcher classified them into 5 areas, they are 1) errors in subject-verb agreement; 2) errors in the use simple past tense; 3) errors in the use of preposition; 4) errors in the use of pronoun; and 5) errors in spelling and punctuation
- 3) Researcher calculated the errors used the following formula as proposed by Sudjono (2004):

$$P = \frac{f}{t} \times 100\%$$

Where : P : percentage
f : frequency of errors
t : total of errors

- 4) The researcher classified the frequency of errors. It was classified based on the criteria proposed by Depdikbud (1994) as follows:

Table 1
Error Classifications

No	Percentage	Classification
1	66 – 100 %	high error
2	36 – 65%	moderate error
3	0 – 35 %	low error

5) The last step was drawing a conclusion based on the analysis.

FINDING

Before conducting the research, the researcher observed the teaching and learning process in the classroom by using observation checklist. The material given to the students was based on the one textbook. The teacher did not prepare the materials from the other sources which were relevant to recount text. She did not use certain methods or techniques in teaching learning process. It made students uninterested in learning about how to make recount text. Moreover, she did not motivate the students.

In learning process, the students and the teacher discussed about materials to improve their skills in recount text. The teacher gave them an example of recount text based on text book when one of the students asked her. Although the teacher guided the students to write recount text, but most of the students did not write based on the steps in writing recount text. The result, when the teacher asked the students to read their writing in front of the class, was only 4 out of 28 students who could do it. The teacher only looked and listened to the students. She did not evaluate recount text that was made by the students. Moreover, the students were not asked by the teacher to made conclusion about the materials in the end of learning process

Result of Test

In relation to the explanation above, this research means to explain errors made by the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Parigi in Academic Year 2013-2014 in making recount text. After collecting and analyzing the data based on the result of the test as the main instrument, the researcher found that there were a lot of errors made by the students. The percentage of the errors made by the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Parigi in writing recount text can be seen in the following table.

Table 2
Students' Percentage Errors

No	Types of Errors	Frequency
1.	Subject verb agreement	25
2.	Use of simple past tense	22
3.	Use of preposition	19
4.	Use of pronoun	8
5.	Spelling and punctuation	24

Based on the data presented, the researcher classified the range of the errors made by the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Parigi systematically from the highest to the lowest ones as follow:

1) Subject-verb agreement

There were 25 out of 28 students who made errors in subject-verb agreement. In this case, students must be able to identify the subject whether it is singular or plural. Having difficulties in identifying the subject made students failed in producing the correct form of the verb. It means that the students have made errors in making the agreement between subject and verb. The examples of their errors as follow:

- a) *I extremely ashamed. (was)
- b) *We *was* angry. (were)
- c) *I so happy. (was)

2) Spelling and punctuation

There were 24 students who made errors in spelling and punctuation. Errors occurred because most of the students were not aware on how the spelling of the words and which word we should put the correct punctuation. The examples of spelling and punctuation errors as follow:

- a) *Last *yeard*, my friend and I went to Lebo Beach. (year)
- b) *Last week I went to the beach. (put comma)
- c) **Finaly* we to house. (finally, put comma, add went)

3) Simple past tense

In writing sentence, we use past tense to describe and to narrate an event or situation in the past time. There were 22 students who made errors in this term. The errors were made by them as follow:

- a) *Last month, my friend and I *go* to Bambalemo Beach. (went)
- b) *I *stay* with my cousin. (stayed)
- c) *We *look* beautiful girls. (looked)

4) Preposition

There were 19 students who made errors in using preposition. Prepositions are connective words which show the relationship between nouns and one of the basic sentence elements: subject, verb, object, or complement.

Preposition should be used based on its context. The examples of students' errors in using prepositions as follows:

- a) *My family and I *go* holiday *at* Makassar. (went to, in)
- b) *My Grandfather went to *in* the garden. (omitted *in*)

5) Pronoun

There were only 8 students who made errors in using pronoun. Pronoun is a word which is used to substitute or instead nouns in the place of a noun or noun phrase. The examples of errors made by students in using pronouns can be seen as follows:

- a) *My friend and I went to Lebo Beach. *I* went there by motorcycle. (we)
- b) *After my friends and I *playing* football together, *my friend and I* so happy and satisfied. (played, we, were,)

Result of Questionnaire

The questionnaires were distributed in order to get additional information related to students' difficulties in making recount text by using English simple sentences. The results of questionnaires were presented in the following table.

Table 3
Results of Questionnaires

No	Questions	Choice of Answer	Frequency	(%)
1	Apakah teks recount mudah dipelajari?	a. Sukar	3	10.7
		b. Sedang	15	53.6
		c. mudah	10	35.7
2	Apakah anda tertarik belajar teks recount?	a. Tertarik	28	100
		b. Kurang tertarik	0	0
		c. Tidak tertarik	0	0
3	Apakah guru pernah memberi tugas untuk membuat teks recount?	a. Sering	10	35.7
		b. Jarang	4	14.3
		c. Tidak pernah	14	50
4	Apakah anda bisa membedakan antara teks recount dengan jenis teks lainnya?	a. Sangat bisa	1	3.6
		b. Bisa	20	71.4
		c. Tidak bisa	7	25
5	Apakah anda mengetahui struktur generik teks recount?	a. Tahu	11	39.3
		b. Kurang tahu	16	57.1
		c. Tidak tahu	1	3.6
6	Apakah anda mengalami kesulitan dalam menyusun teks recount?	a. Sering	3	57.1
		b. Jarang	15	39.3
		c. Tidak pernah	10	3.6
7	Apakah anda mengalami kesulitan dalam menentukan kosakata dalam membuat teks recount?	a. Sering	5	17.8
		b. Kadang-kadang	22	78.6
		c. Tidak pernah	1	3.6
8	Apakah anda mengalami kesulitan tenses dalam menulis teks recount?	a. Sering	12	42.8
		b. Kadang-kadang	11	39.3
		c. Tidak pernah	5	17.9
9	Apakah anda merasa kesulitan dalam menulis paragraf orientation, events, dan reorientation dalam teks recount?	a. Sangat sulit	1	3.6
		b. Sulit	15	53.6
		c. Mudah	12	42.8
10	Bagaimana cara anda mengatasi kesulitan dalam membuat teks recount ketika diberikan tugas oleh guru?	a. Bertanya pada guru	17	60.7
		b. Belajar kelompok	10	35.7
		c. Menyontek punya teman	1	3.6

DISCUSSION

In this research, the researcher tried to identify and to analyze the kinds of grammatical errors that the students made in their writing, especially in recount text. Besides, she wanted

to find out the sources of their errors. Before the test was given by the researcher to the students, she observed the teaching learning process in the classroom. She found that most of students were not interested. Moreover their teacher did not motivate them when the lesson began. It made students were not serious when they learnt. As the result, when their teacher asked them to made recount text, they could not write it. The process of error analysis was begun by asking the students to make their own recount writing based on the topic that was provided by the researcher. The students were asked to collect their writing an hour after the test was given. Then, the researcher analyzed the students' writing by using formula as proposed by Sudjono (2004).

From the research and the analysis that the researcher has conducted, she found out that the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Parigi made the following types of error: 1). Subject-verb agreement (89.2%); 2). Simple past tense (78%); 3). Preposition (67%); 4). Pronoun (8.5%); and 5). Spelling and punctuation (85.7%). All percentage errors above can be classified into high errors except errors in pronoun.

By looking at the result, the researcher found that errors in subject-verb agreement were the highest percentage errors made by students in grammar area, while the lowest errors were the use of pronoun. The errors which are made by the students were caused by several sources. First, interlingual error was the most difficult aspects for students. It was one of the reasons why the students made errors. It was because they always referred to their Bahasa Indonesia in making their English writing. They made error when they translated Bahasa Indonesia into English literary, for example *Saya sangat senang di sana* was translated “*I so happy in there” while it should be “I was so happy”.

Furthermore, students felt difficult in constructing sentences grammatically even they thought that they could choose the appropriate vocabulary when they wrote as they answered in questionnaire. Induced errors happened in their verb tense especially in past tense. James (1998) states that induced errors are the result of being misled by the way in which the teachers give definitions, examples, explanations, and arrange practice opportunities. In other words, most of the teaching and learning process can influence the learners to made errors or not. They made the same errors when it comes to verb changes from present to past. The researcher assumed that the students have not understood well about the past tense which becomes the main features in recount text.

Additionally, the result of the test showed that the use of pronoun in writing was not too difficult for the eighth grade students at SMP Negeri 2 Parigi. It was classified as the lowest errors. It could be happened since they had basic knowledge about the use of pronoun after

they were taught by the teacher through certain methods or techniques. Teacher always gave them assignment about pronoun in different topics. It made students know and understand well about pronoun. The researcher assumed that they have learnt about pronoun and how to use it properly because they always practiced how to use pronoun not only in recount text but also in other topics of assignment.

After observing the teaching learning process and analyzing the results of test, the researcher gave questionnaire to the students in order to get additional information about their knowledge in recount text. Concerning to the result of questionnaire, the researcher found that most of the students felt difficult in using simple past tense and in choosing appropriate vocabulary when they wrote. They felt difficult in constructing paragraph of recount text. It was supported by the result of percentage when they answered item 7, 8, and 9 in questionnaire. There were 78.9% students who answered that they sometimes felt difficult in choosing appropriate vocabulary. It means that vocabulary was the difficult element in writing for them. Meanwhile, 12 students (42.8%) always felt difficult in using past tense. It can be assumed that they always got confused in changing verb from present tense form into simple past tense form. In other words, simple past tense as one of aspects in grammar was very difficult part for students in making recount text. Besides that, there were 15 students (53.6%) responded that they felt difficult in writing *orientation*, *events*, and *re-orientation* paragraph. Based on the percentage above, it can be concluded that students did not master well about language features of recount text.

Students of SMP Negeri 2 Parigi especially the eighth grade students thought that they had participated actively in the teaching learning process. They also felt recount text was easy to learn, but they did not understand well the language features of this text. When the teacher asked them to make recount text, they just wrote about their experiences in the past. They did not pay attention about their grammatical sentences when they wrote. It was possible to happen since they were still beginners in learning English. Besides, they did not practice much at home. The teacher probably did not give them many examples and exercises. Nevertheless, some of students did not hesitate to ask their teacher directly when they faced the difficulties.

Regarding the result of students' errors in writing, there were two previous researchers conducted their research to analyze students' errors in writing recount text. Therefore, the researcher wants to make comparison between the result of this research and the previous. It aimed at finding out whether this research has similarities and differences from previous researches or not.

In previous research, the researcher explained the causes of students' errors. It is similar to this research. Umiyatun (2011) conducted her research in SMP Negeri 2 Purworejo which aimed at finding out how the communicative purpose of a recount text written by the students is achieved and how recount texts are written in terms of functional stages, the features of lexico - grammatical problems, and to explain why the students write recount text in the way they do. It is different from this current research which conducted to analyze kinds of grammatical errors made by the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Parigi.

Furthermore, the second research was Emmaryana (2010). She conducted her research that was purposed to detect, to identify, and to analyze the grammatical errors done by the students in their written text, and to find the reasons why the students make errors in their writing. This current research is similar to this research because this research also aimed at analyzing grammatical error made by the students. Previous researcher conducted her research to the first year students of SMA Negeri 1 Cigudeg-Bogor found that the most dominant or the highest errors was occurred in tense with the percentage 95%. Meanwhile, the result of this research showed that the highest errors made by the students of SMP Negeri 2 Parigi were subject-verb agreement or also called sentence pattern with the percentage 89.2%. Shortly, in the current research, error in tense was more dominant than errors in subject-verb agreement while in this research, error in subject verb agreement was more dominant rather than error in tense.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

According to the explanation in the previous chapter, the researcher concluded that the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Parigi have some difficulties in writing recount text. Most of them did errors in grammar areas. There were 25 students (89.2%) who made error in subject-verb agreement. There were 22 students (78%) that made errors in use simple past tense. There were 19 students (67%) who did errors in using preposition. There were 8 students (28.5%) that made errors in using pronoun. Last, there were 24 students (85.7%) who did errors in spelling and punctuation. Those errors are made by the students were caused by two sources. They were interlingual error and induced error.

The percentage of each error in grammar area can be ranged from high to low errors. This point means that the eight grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Parigi had poor ability in writing recount text. Furthermore, based on the result of questionnaire, most of students responded that they felt difficult in constructing grammatical sentences and it was appropriate with the result of the test.

Considering the conclusion, the researcher would like to give some suggestions to the students and the teachers. The suggestions are as follows: 1) The students should learn more about subject-verb agreement, tense, spelling and punctuation, pronoun and preposition in order to reduce their grammatical errors in making paragraph; 2) The students should do self-learning and try to make more practice concerning to the materials about the grammar. Furthermore, they can write recount text using varied words in good construction; 3) the teacher should give more easily understood explanation in order to make the students more interested in learning English, especially the grammar before asking the students to write a paragraph. 4) The teacher should give more guidance or direction on how to make recount text well.

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