

**ERROR ANALYSIS OF SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT IN THE DIARY
WRITTEN BY THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS**

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Abstract: This study was aimed at investigating the types of errors and the factors of errors which cause subject-verb agreement errors in the diary written by the second-semester students of the English Department at IAIN Palangka Raya. The qualitative approach with content analysis was applied in this study. The analysis was based on surface strategy taxonomy. It was used writing test, writing task, interview, and documentation for the data collection. The subjects of the study were three students which were selected from the lowest score obtained from the writing test. The three students were given writing tasks to write their diaries in two times a week within a month. In analyzing the data, it was used some techniques such as data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The results show that there were 52 subject-verb agreement errors in their diaries. They were spread out on three types of error on surface strategy taxonomy: 14 (26.92%) errors in misinformation, 19 (36.54%) errors in addition, and 19 (36.54%) errors in omission. The subject-verb agreement errors in their diaries were caused by 12 (23.08%) interlingual transfers and 40 (76.92%) intralingual transfers.

Keywords: *error analysis, subject-verb agreement, writing, diary*

English has four skills and some linguistics components that must be mastered in teaching learning process. Grammar is one of English components that must be mastered in order to able to construct English sentences. Traditionally, grammar subdivided into two different but inter-related areas of study. Here is the introduction of the paper written without heading, which includes are view of related literature and research purpose in essay style. It means that the introduction should clearly state the purpose of the paper. It should include key references to appropriate work, and it should state the significant contribution of the research (Andrew, 1998). Writing is difficult to be done by students because it needs a correct

grammar, content, main idea, or topic. To make a writer easier to write, the students should be able to know the writing strategies.

One of the discussions in writing that is important to be highlighted is subject-verb agreement. There are many verbs that used in the English. A verb must agree with a subject that followed. These influence very much with the meaning of that sentence. It is related with grammar also because one of English grammar subject is about subject-verb agreement material. It is the suitability between subject and object (predicate) (Fuad, 2006). When to begin writing, it is important to make sure that subjects and verbs agree with each other. That means that plural subjects should be matched to plural verbs and singular verbs should be matched to singular subjects.

One part of writing to be learned is a paragraph. In writing the subject, the first-grade students learned how to write good sentences. Some of the students sometimes had difficulties when they wrote a sentence, some of them didn't know the sentence grammatically.

Diary was a notebook made by the students to write about several important things such as their experiences, daily activities, planning in the future, or some ideas. Some students think that diary as a notebook to write an important thing for them. So based on the background above, it is interesting to find out the error of subject-verb agreement of student's writing in their diaries, and want to know the content of student's diaries.

Based on writer's experience when was studied in the fourth semester that the students had difficulties in constructing a good sentence especially in subject-verb agreement. Although this is the base material in English, in fact, many students still make some errors when they make it in a sentence or a paragraph. The reasons for the errors are poor knowledge about tenses, such as present tense and past tense. Furthermore, the students had some difficulties in writing a long sentence in form of paragraphs and cannot defend structure of tense used continuity. The students also made an error in vocabulary and spelling. In another class, the students had material about the diary and the lecturer instructed to write diary regularly in a semester. The purpose was to build students' awareness to write and gave more comprehension in grammatical writing. Based on that experience, this study will combine two treatments to be the solution to solve students' problems in writing a good sentence and difficulties in grammar comprehension.

Related to the previous study on the error analysis for English students, some studies had been carried out. The study of development research in junior, senior high school and university levels were conducted. First, research by Stapa (2009). The result of the study shows that majority of the students have committed errors in subject-verb agreement especially in SVA of the number and followed by SVA of person. The students were to avoid using the complex sub-rules of SVA that include the agreement with the coordinated subject, agreement with indefinite expressions of

the amount and also notional agreement and proximity. Second, Riyani (2013) investigated on grammatical errors of the students. The result of this study shows that the types of the grammatical error in using sentences made by the students at the tenth year of MA Muslimat NU Palangka Raya classified into thirteen categories. The students have difficulties in an unnecessary word with frequency. It was the highest category of error that students' made. Intralingual error by frequency was the cause of students' error made.

Based on the background of the study, the problem of this study can be stated as follows: What are the types of error which cause subject-verb agreement error in writing diary? The subject of the study was the second semester students of the English education program. It related with the reason subject-verb agreement to be material in this study. Subject- verb agreement is one of the basic materials in English because every sentence must have subject and verb at least. It was suitable with the students' level in the second-semester. It will help student to prepare themselves to enter the next level in the next semester.

According to Dulay "Error analysis is an analytical tool, as is the specification of transitional construction, the computation of acquisition orders, and the delineation of special utterance types" (Heidi, 1982). However, the first language is not the only case of the students' errors. Many researchers have proved conclusively that the traditional contrastive analysis of two grammars cannot predict the frequency and hierarchy of learners' errors. From the recent investigation, they found that even though some errors are a direct result of the first language interference, the percentage is not so large as it had been believed. It means that errors are not only the result of the interference of the first language but also the result of some problems of the acquisition of the second language itself. By showing the students errors, it is expected that error analysis will help the teacher in: Determining teaching materials hierarchy, determining emphasis in explanation and exercise, preparing a program for remedial teaching, and choosing the appropriate points to evaluate students' language mastery.

The classification of errors in this study is based on surface strategy taxonomy. Dulai states that a surface strategy taxonomy highlight the ways surface structured is alerted: learners may omit necessary items or add unnecessary ones; they may misform items or disorder them (Heidi, 1982). The classification above is explained as follows: (1) Omission errors are characterized by the absence of an item that must be appearing in a well-formed. Although any morpheme or word in a sentence potential candidate for the omission. (2) Additions errors are the opposite of omissions. They are characteristic by the presence of an item which must not appear in a well-formed utterance. Three types of addition errors have been observed in the speech of both L1 and L2 learners. (3) Misformation errors are characterized by the use of the wrong form of the morpheme or structure while in the omission errors the

items are not supplied at all, in malformation errors the learner supplies something, although it is incorrect. (4) Misordering errors are characterized by the incorrect placement of a morpheme in an utterance. Misordering errors occur systematically for both L2 and L1 learners in constructing that have already been acquired, especially simple (direct) and embedded (indirect) question.

Brown further classified sources of errors into the following categories: (1) Interference transfer: that is negative influence of the mother tongue of learner. (2) Intralingual transfer: that is the negative transfer of items within the target language. In other words, the incorrect generalization of the rules within the target language. (3) The context of learning: this overlaps both types of transfer. For example, the classroom with the teacher and its materials in the case of school learning or the social situation in the case of untutored second language learning. In a classroom context, the teacher or the textbook can lead the learners to make the wrong generalization about the language. (4) Communication strategies: it is obvious that communication strategy is the conscious employment of verbal mechanisms for communicating an idea when linguistic forms are not available to the learners for some reasons.

A subject-verb agreement based on the content is divided into three definitions. Definition of the subject is the part of a sentence or clause that commonly indicates (a) what it is about, or (b) who or what performs the action (that is, the agent). The subject is typically a noun, noun phrase, or pronoun. In a declarative sentence, the subject usually appears before the verb ("Gus never smiles"). In an interrogative sentence, the subject usually follows the first part of a verb ("Does Gus ever smile?").

According to Oxford dictionary, diary is a book, sometimes with spaces for each day of the year, in which one writes about one's daily experiences, record on private though, etc. also diary is a book with spaces for each day of the year, in which one can write down appointments, things to be done in the future, etc (Hornby, 2000). In this study, the diary was used as media to analyze the students' subject-verb agreement in errors. The reason the diary chose to be a media because it made easy the students to explore their English vocabulary and increase their awareness in writing, because in diary the students write only their important event that happened in their activities in a day. Meanwhile, they have a fresh idea to write it in a sentence or paragraph.

The outcome of this study was to describe the types and factors which cause subject-verb agreement. The students have a good comprehension in grammar and rule of English in English written.

METHOD

This study used qualitative approach. In this study, a qualitative approach intended to know the description of types of error which cause subject-verb

agreement error in writing diary and the factors which cause subject-verb agreement errors in writing a diary.

This study type is content analysis or document analysis is a research method applied to written or visual materials for the purpose of identifying specific characteristics of the material. The materials analyzed can be in form of textbooks, newspapers, web pages, speeches, television programs, advertisements, musical compositions, or any of a host of other types of documents. Content analysis is widely used in education. The following are some of the purposes of content analysis in educational research: (1) to identify bias, prejudice, or propaganda in textbooks. For example, a researcher might analyze high school history texts in a particular school district to determine how often women are mentioned and how much discussion is given in each mention. (2) to analyzes types of errors in students' writings. For example, you could look at students' written work to classify spelling or grammatical errors and their nature and frequency. (3) to describe prevailing practices. For example, you could identify the entrance requirements of Big Ten universities by analyzing their bulletins. (4) to discover the level of difficulty of material in textbooks or other publications. For example, you could ask, "What is the vocabulary level of the fourth-grade social studies textbooks in this district?" (5) to discover the relative importance of or interest in, certain topics. For example, you might analyze popular educational research textbooks to see the coverage given to qualitative research and changes in that coverage over time.

This study used cluster random sampling. Based on YatimRianto, cluster random sampling technique is used if found the heterogenpopulation. The subpopulation is a group or cluster which has heterogen characteristic. Meanwhile, in sample stratification each subpopulation is homogeny (Yosi, 2012). This study did not take all classes as a subject, but only class C. From the observation with the lecturer, this class contains the students which have a bad score in the last previous semester. Based on that fact, it supports this study to observe the students' problem in learning English, especially about subject-verb agreement.

After that, to make the data more comprehensive about types and factors which cause of subject-verb agreement, this study used purposive sampling. Sugiyono state the purposive sampling is the technique of getting the source of sample data by using the definite consideration (Sugiyono, 2007).

FINDINGS

In describing the type of error and factors which cause subject-verb agreement errors in writing a diary, this study took the data from the students' writing test. The tests were given to find out the students' errors in subject-verb agreement. The topic of the writing test was daily activities which consist of 100-150 words with duration 50 minutes. This test so important because of the result of this process will show the

students which have difficulties in subject-verb agreement. Then, this study identified the subject-verb agreement errors from a paragraph which made by the students. Based on the result, three students with the lowest score were selected be the object of the treatment.

From the writing test process, it can conclude that the English pre-intermediate students in class C had many errors in subject-verb agreement. Based on the finding of this study, the three students were given writing tests to write a diary in a month regularly. Its functions were to know types of error which cause subject-verb agreement error deeply and to know the factors which cause subject-verb agreement error. The students still had difficulties in subject-verb agreement in writing sentences. The function of this writing test was to select the students with the lowest score in subject-verb agreement. The students were arranged by their score from the highest score to the lowest score. The three students with the lowest score were selected as sample of this study to write a diary in a month.

Based on the writing task or writing diaries, three students in class A there were 52 subject-verb agreement errors on their diaries. These were spread out on 3 types of error on surface strategy taxonomy. There were 14 or 26.92% of error in misformation; 19 or 36.54% of error in addition and 19 or 36.54% error in omission. Addition and omission became the trend errors were done by the students in their diaries. Both of them have 19 numbers of errors.

Based on the description of the students' subject-verb agreement errors in writing diary, it shows that the students did errors were influenced by interference transfer and intralingual transfer. There were 12 interlingual transfers and 40 intralingual transfers which cause subject-verb agreement errors. The interlingual transfer is a system that has a structurally intermediate status between the native language and the target language. In addition, errors that happened were caused by the interference of mother tongue language. It happened because the features of the two languages are different. This research also did an interview with the three students.

From the interview, two students' mother tongue is Banjar and one student's mother tongue is Dayak. The interference of native to target or the difference underlying assumption between the native and the target one can be a source of errors. It supported by the students' statement that they wrote in English only when their lecturer gave tasks. Because of that reasons the students still entered their mother tongue rules in English written.

The intralingual transfer is an error made by the learners cause of the feature of L2 itself. The intralingual transfer was caused by over-generalization, ignorance of rule restriction, false concept hypothesized. Based on an interview with the students, it showed that the students have learned English in several years and known about subject-verb agreement. But, the students have some problems, especially in

grammar. The students knew some rules of English but over-generalized it to another context.

Intralingual transfer became a prominent factor which caused subject-verb agreement errors with numbers of errors were 40 or 76.92%. Grammar became a students' problem in writing diary. The student wrote some inflections that do not appear in a rule. For example on the students' diary: "I am watch TV with my friend". The students knew to be of the subject I is am. But, the students entered it into another context, in this case about the verbal sentence. When the students wrote to be in verbal sentences, it means the students made errors. The number errors of interlingual transfer were 12 or 23.08%. In some sentence the students' brought their mother tongue understanding and applied it to wrote English written. For example, "I can to laugh together and can to watch tv together". In the students' mother tongue, Banjarese or Dayakese permitted a sentence without a subject. But, when that rule brought to English, it made the sentence to be ungrammatical and made happened subject-verb agreement error.

DISCUSSION

Based on the research findings showed that from three students in class C there were 52 subject-verb agreement errors on their diaries. These were spread out in 3 types of error based on surface strategy taxonomy. It is shown as follows: (1) Omission, the number of omission is 19 or 36.54% from 52 errors in students' diaries. This type of errors was characterized by the absence of an item that must appear in a well-formed utterance. In many cases, the students omitted subject or verb in the sentence. (2) Addition, from three students, all of them average made this type of error. The number of error is 19 or 36.54%. It was characterized by the presence of an item, which not appear in the well-formed utterance. In the students' diaries showed the students added to be, inflectional -ing. (3) Misformation, the number of misformation is 14 or 26.92%. In their diary, the students wrote the wrong form of the morpheme or structure and also in some written did errors in alternating form, it gave way to apparently fairly free alternation of various members of a class with each other.

Based on the research findings shows there were 52 subject-verb agreement errors. The intralingual transfer became a prominent factor which caused subject-verb agreement errors with a number of errors were 40 or 76.92%. While interlingual transfer had a number of errors were 12 or 23.08%. This was possible due to a number of reasons. First, the students have little knowledge of grammar. It would be looked in the result of the interview. The students' stated that their problem while writing accurately is grammar. Although they have known about subject-verb agreement, it did not enough to solve it. The second reason was the students could

not exit from their comprehension about their mother tongue. The students applied it to English comprehension and wrote English written with their mother tongue ways.

CONCLUSION

The study is aimed at describing the types of errors and the factors of errors which caused subject-verb agreement in writing diary based on surface strategy taxonomy. Based on the research findings, it could be concluded that: (1) Based on the describing the types of errors which caused subject-verb agreement error in writing diary showed that from 3 students in class C there were 52 errors in the students' diary. These were spread out on 3 types of error on surface strategy taxonomy. There were 14 or 26.92% of error in misformation; 19 or 36.54% of error in addition and 19 or 36.54% error in omission. (2) The factors of errors which caused subject-verb agreement in writing diary based on Brown as follow: it was found that based on the research findings showed that the students did errors were influenced by interference transfer and intralingual transfer. There were 12 or 23.08% interlingual transfers and 40 or 76.92% intralingual transfer which cause subject-verb agreement errors.

The suggestions are given to the future researcher, lecturer, and the student. (1) for the future researcher, since the study was case study research, it was advisable that the future researcher follows up the study by conducting research on an error analysis of subject-verb agreement in writing a diary with different design and the same topic of the study. In addition, the future researcher could focus the study on the problems in subject-verb agreement. It was important because there were students still have many problems to write a sentence with subject-verb agreement. This problem can be a good case to be analyzed for the future researcher to do research when the student in high semester in the next years. (2) It was suggested that the teacher should be focus to teach grammar and some basic material especially subject-verb agreement. The teacher also can give an assignment to write diary to increase the student awareness to write. (3) First, it was suggested that the students have to learn more about subject-verb agreement and grammar to make a good sentence in writing a diary. Second, the students should be more correctly and carefully to write and choose words that will be used in writing. The students have to carefully to different between English pattern and their mother tongue to write English written. Third, the students have to more write such as paragraph, diary or daily activities in English. To sum up, the more the students practiced, the better they improved.

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FOREWORD

The proceedings, *21st Century English Language Teaching*, are the selected papers that were presented in the 2nd National Conference on ELT (NACELT) 2016 conducted at the State Islamic Institute of Palangka Raya, Central Kalimantan, on Monday, 14 November 2016. The title of the proceedings was taken from the theme of the National Conference.

The conference was organized by English Education Study Program, Language Education Department, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, the State Islamic Institute of Palangka Raya. This annual conference is a discussion forum that researchers, practitioners (lecturers, teachers and instructors) and teachers can expose their ideas, researches and products on language teaching of applied linguistics, general linguistics and literature.

The activity of this national conference is aimed at testing out ideas and perspectives of all researchers, practitioners (lecturers, teachers, instructors) with intellectual bearings that can be different one another to share a similar frame of the references. Additionally, it is objected to bring together a broader spectrum of scholars to have an intellectual conversation.

With the compilation of the conference papers, it is expected that the proceedings will be beneficial for the practitioners (lecturers, teachers and instructors) participating in the conference. Also, it is hoped that this proceedings will be useful for those who are interested in the development of their knowledge in language teaching of applied linguistics, general linguistics and literature.

The appreciation is addressed to the organization of the conference and the publication of the proceedings. First, it is addressed to Rector of the State Islamic Institute of Palangka Raya (Dr. Ibnu Elmi A.S. Pelu, S.H., M.H.) as well as Dean of the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education of the State Islamic Institute of Palangka Raya (Drs. Fahmi, M.Pd). The gratitude is also addressed to the plenary speakers of the conference, Made Hery Santosa, Ph.D (Ganesha University of Education), SF. Luthfie Arguby Purnomo (State Islamic Institute of Surakarta), Teguh Arie Sandy, S.Pd (State University of Malang). Finally, the deepest thanks go to the members of the organizing committee, and all lecturers and students of English Education Study Program of the State Islamic Institute of Palangka Raya who gave their attention and time for the success of the national conference.

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