A MORPHOLOGICAL ERROR ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' WRITTEN REPORTS ON INDONESIA'S 2014 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

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ABSTRACT

This study, conducted at the Department of English Literature of Universitas Sumatera Utara (USU), aimed to investigate the morphological errors made by university students in their report texts on Indonesia's Presidential Election in 2014. The objectives of this qualitative and descriptive study were to: a) find out the most predominant morphological errors made by the students; b) investigate the sources causing the errors; and c) suggest appropriate remediation for identified morphological errors. In analyzing the data, the Error Analysis theory, espoused by Gass and Selinker (2008), was applied as it provides six systematic procedures in overcoming L2 learning errors. Results of the analysis revealed that the students respectively made significant morphological errors in: a) the use of derivational morphemes with 46 errors (51%); b) the use of inflectional morphemes with 43 errors (47%); and c) the use of affixes with two errors (2%). The morphological error made by the students was caused by two primary sources, the interlanguage and intralanguage errors. To address these problematic areas, the researchers have suggested several pedagogical remediations to follow up.

Key Words: Indonesia's Presidential Election; report text; morphological error; error analysis

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui kesalahan morfologi yang dibuat oleh mahasiswa Departemen Sastra Inggris Universitas Sumatera Utara, dalam teks laporan yang mereka tulis tentang Pemilihan Presiden Tahun 2014. Selain itu, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk; a) mencari tahu jenis kesalahan morfologi apa yang paling banyak terjadi; b) mencari tahu sumber penyebab kesalahan; dan c) memberikan langkah-langkah yang sesuai untuk mengatasi kesalahan morfologi. Dalam menganalisis data, teori yang digunakan adalah Teori Analisis Kesalahan yang digubah oleh Gass & Selinker pada tahun 2008, karena teori ini memuat enam prosedur lengkap dalam menangani masalah kesalahan pembelajaran bahasa kedua. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif. Hasil analisis data mengemukakan bahwa kesalahan yang paling banyak terjadi dalam penggunaan morfem derivasi dengan jumlah 46 kesalahan (51%), diikuti oleh penggunaan morfem infleksional dengan jumlah 43 kesalahan (47%), dan yang paling sedikit adalah penggunaan imbuhan dengan jumlah 2 kesalahan (2%). Ada dua penyebab terjadinya kesalahan morfologi, yaitu kesalahan intrabahasa dan kesalahan interbahasa. Selanjutnya, peneliti menyarankan sejumlah langkah remediasi pedagogik untuk mengatasi kesalahan morfologi.

Kata Kunci: *Pemilihan Presiden di Indonesia; teks laporan; kesalahan morfologi; analisis kesalahan*

INTRODUCTION

Students, who are majoring in English literature, commonly are assumed to have mastered four foundational language skills, namely writing, reading, speaking, and listening. Also, they are often assumed to possess exceptional skills related to the understanding of grammar, which is often considered pivotal as a starting line to learn the language. However, Gass and Selinker (2008) stated that the most fundamental of learning a second language (L2) grammar comes from the step of word formation called as the morphology (a linguistic branch which studies the formation of words). Kolenchery (2015) defines morphology as the study of these meaning-bearing units and the rules governing them; the study of the structure of words. In other words, it performs as the foundation which a person could rely on for further stage of leaning a language, such as word modification. To make it clear, by mastering morphology, a person could understand how to change a word into a plural form, past participle form, present participle form, and so on. From this aspect as well, many tried to investigate how humans process the word formation and transformation. In relation to our context, we have seen how understanding the morphology is more essential for students majoring in English as it could identify which aspects in language learning need further development. Nevertheless, the importance of learning morphology becomes emergent as findings showed that Indonesian students still encountered some problems with morphological and grammatical aspects despite the length of their study of English.

Getting the data from students' work, Kusumawardhani (2018) and Dinamika and Hanafiah (2019) found that morphology errors were quite dominating in students' work. Kusumawardhani (2018) found that a group of participants made derivational morphology errors in their English narrative compositions, such as in verbs, nouns, gerunds, and other forms. Moreover, Dinamika and Hanafiah (2019) found that even the students of the English Literature Department make many errors in their report text writings. Besides, the research findings revealed that the most errors were in the use of the article 'a/an/the'. While the errors themselves did not make confusion while reading students' work, the existence of such errors needs considering. Another study (Burhanuddin, 2020) also found that participants from the English department also made errors in fulfilling the open-ended questionnaire. He found that students make eleven

types of errors, which caused some ambiguities to the meaning of the sentences they wrote. Morphological errors, however, did not only take place in Indonesia but also in other countries as well. Ramadan (2015) also found that Jordanian tertiary students in their last year still had an issue with morphological errors due to overgeneralization and language interference. Waelateh, Boonsuk, Ambele, and Jeharsae (2019) also found that their participants (Thai undergraduate students) had some issues with morphological errors, such as failing to put appropriate affixes and using certain affixes excessively due to overgeneralization.

Regarding those errors, several factors may cause such errors in language production, such as different grammatical structures between L1 and L2, language interference, and the lack of language competence. This issue might also be related to the status of English in Indonesia as a foreign language which is only used for limited purposes (Lauder, 2008). While many factors might affect students' errors, we viewed that it was necessary to rather identify their errors. Once identified, these errors could then be treated as a learning opportunity for students majoring in English. Therefore, in this study, we utilized one of the prominent approaches in analyzing students'

errors, namely Error Analysis (EA). Error analysis is part of the methodology of the psycholinguistic investigation of language learning (Corder, 1981). It also plays a fundamental role in investigating, identifying, and describing second language learners' errors and their causes. Most importantly, EA can enable second language teachers to find out different sources of second language errors and take some pedagogical precautions towards them (Al-Khresheh, 2016). In other words, EA could help language teachers identify their students' level of L2 learning and help them succeed in tackling the errors.

This study was conducted to carry out the issue of morphological errors made by the students of the English Literature Department of Universitas Sumatera Utara (USU) in their English report text writing. If any, the researcher intended to classify the types of errors and explain the sources of errors as well. Furthermore, to define errors made by the students, contrasting L1 and L2 grammar was undertaken. Then, the objectives of this study were formulated, as follows: a) to find out the most predominant morphological errors made by the students; b) to investigate the source that causes the errors; and c) to take out

pedagogical remediation that suits the morphological errors found.

METHOD

The qualitative descriptive approach was applied in this study. Students' L1 (Bahasa) and L2 (English) were taken as the data source to analyze their morphological errors. Besides, EA designed by Gass & Selinker (2008) was also utilized by following its six procedures, namely *collecting data, identifying errors, classifying errors, quantifying errors, analyzing errors* and *remediation.*

The participants of this study were 20 undergraduate students of English Literature Department of FIB-USU. They were in their sixth semester and have passed the mandatory subjects such as Writing I to IV and English Structure I to IV. Moreover, these students were going to continue writing their final thesis to obtain their bachelor's degree.

In the data collection phase, the participants were instructed to write a topic-based report text on Indonesia General Election 2014. The length of the text was ranged between 150 up to 250 words. The writing sheets were distributed to each student. In the data analysis phase, the researchers applied the six procedures of EA adopted from Gass and Selinker (2008), as follows:

1)Collection of data—the data was obtained from 20 students' topic-based report text writing; 2) Identification of error—the researchers identify the errors that the students make by marking them; 3) Classification of error—the errors were classified into their morphological categories, namely the use of affixes, derivational, and inflectional morphemes; 4) Quantification of error—the frequency of errors was counted and tabulated based on each category; 5) Analysis of the source of error—the researchers analyzed the source of errors, namely, interlanguage error (Indonesian negative interference) and intralanguage error (students' incompetence in applying English grammar into their writing); 6) Remediation—the researchers suggested some pedagogical remediation, particularly on English word formation.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The complete procedures of error analysis were applied to 20 students' writing sheets and generated several findings. Though morphology is a basic linguistic branch of forming words, this study showed that students found it hard to avoid making errors in the real practice, primarily due to the

intralanguage error. The results of morphological error analysis were representatively presented, as follows:

The use of affixes

Theoretically, there are several types of affixes in English word formation, but this research only adopts three kinds of affixes which commonly occur in English students' report text writing namely; *suffix*, *prefix*, and *circumfix*.

Table 1. The Use of Affixes Error

Initial	Type of Errors	Error Form	Frequency of Occurrence	Source & Cause	Correct Form
ATR	Prefix	-	-	-	-
	Suffix	*Persuation[1]*	1	Intralanguage error	*Persuasion[1]*
	Circumfix	-	-	-	-
APP	Prefix	-	-	-	-
	Suffix	*Actrees[1]*	1	Intralanguage error Indeterminacy of the suffix use	Actress[1]
	Circumfix	-	-	-	-

Student 'ATR' made an error in the suffix used, in which he wrote the word *'persuation'* instead of *'persuasion'*. They sound quite similar to each other, yet it is different in word-formation. The word *'persuasion'* is a noun, which is derived from the verb *'persuade + ion'* then, it changes the word's class as a noun. While the word *persuation'* has no meaning at all.

Moreover, student 'APP' wrote the word *'actrees'* instead of *'actress'*. It is an error, as the wrong word has no meaning in English. The right word formation is *'actress'* (noun), which is derived from the verb *'act'*. In the two samples above, it was found that the students still made errors in using affixes. The use of affixes occurs 2 times in 20 students' report text writings. The use of affixes errors was only found in the use of suffixes. This result showed that the students made a small number of affixes errors. Besides, all of the errors were caused by the intralanguage error.

The use of derivational morpheme

Errors related to derivational morpheme were taken as the data and the results of our analysis were partially presented in the table below.

Student 'APS' made an error when using the word 'democracy' that precedes a noun; in which an adjective should precede a noun. Therefore, the right word formation is *'democratic'* country instead of *'democracy'* country. Moreover, he used the word *'instrumental'* (which is an adjective) that precedes the phrase *'of the presidential election'*. Meanwhile, if there is an *'of + proper noun'*, a noun should have preceded it. Therefore, the

exact word to be used is *'instrument'* instead.

Student 'AFN' used the phrase *'Presidential Indonesian'* instead of *'the President of Indonesia'*, he put double adjectives in that phrase, for *presidential* and *Indonesian* are both adjectives, which are ineligible in the English grammar.

Table 2. The Use of Derivational Morpheme Error

Initial	Type of Errors	Error Form	Frequency of Occurrence	Source & Cause	Correct Form
APS	The use of derivational morpheme	*…Democracy[1] country*	2	Intralanguage error Indeterminacy of the use of derivational morpheme	*…Democratic[1] country*
		…Be the instrumental[1] of the presidential election		Intralanguage error Indeterminacy of the use of derivational morpheme	*…Be the instrument[1] of the presidential election*
AFN	The use of derivational morpheme	*Presidential Indonesian[1] The election presidential[2]*	2	Interlanguage error Overgeneralisation of the Indonesian's rule of nouns formation	*Indonesian President[1] The presidential election[2]*

The same issue also happened in the second sample, *'the election presidential'*, he technically translated the phrase from Bahasa Indonesia into English. In contrast, the phrase should be *'the presidential election'* instead.

After having the entire derivational morpheme errors analyzed, the types of error occurred 46 times in 20 students' report text writings. The derivational morpheme error is mostly caused by intralanguage errors for 32 times of occurrence. Meanwhile, the interlanguage errors occur for 14 times.

The Use of Inflectional Morpheme

Beside the derivational morpheme, errors in the inflectional morpheme were also partially presented in the table below.

Student 'APS' made six inflectional morpheme errors caused by intralanguage error; he did not use the correct inflectional word-formation to indicate the number of the noun. As an example, he wrote *'each parties'*, whereas a singular noun should follow a phrase that is preceded by 'each'; therefore, the correct form of that phrase should be *'each party'*. In another part, he wrote *'the society vote'*, it is undoubtedly an error of inflectional morpheme, because he did not use the singular verb that must have joined the singular subject. Therefore, the correct form should be *'the society votes'*.

Student 'DMM' in the first issue writes *'the two candidate's team'*, which is morphologically incorrect, as it has a plural subject, but what follows it is a singular noun. Therefore, the correct form should be *'the two candidate's teams'.* In another part, he wrote the phrase *'their opinion'*, clearly it shows that determiner *'their'* indicates plural pronoun; therefore the noun following it should be plural too (*'their opinions'*).

Table 3. The use of inflectional morpheme error

Initial	Type of Errors	Error Form	Frequency of Occurrence	Source & Cause	Correct Form
APS	The use of inflectional morpheme	Political strategy of *each parties[1]*... As the *representative[2]* of PDI-P, Jokowi and Jusuf Kalla … / Prabowo and Hatta Radjasa became the *representative[3]* of Gerindra party / …the society *vote[4]* / Even though there were *several miscommunication[5]* between *the supporter[6]*	6	Intralanguage error[1-6]	Political strategy of *each party[1]* … As the *representatives[2]* of PDI-P, Jokowi and Jusuf Kalla … / Prabowo and Hatta Radjasa became the *representatives[3]* of Gerindra party / …the society *votes[4]* / Even though there were *several miscommunications[5]* between *the supporters[6]*
DMM	The use of inflectional morpheme	The two candidate's *team[1]*.. / They share free tees and *merchandise[2]* / …their *opinion[3]* / …by their own *way[4]*	4	Intralanguage error[1,2,3,4] Indeterminacy of the number use	The two candidate's *teams[1]*.. / They share free tees and *merchandises[2]* / …their *opinions[3]* / …by their own *ways[4]*

After analyzing the inflectional morpheme errors, we found that this

type of errors occurred for 43 times in 20 students' report text writings. The fundamental error was caused by the intralanguage error for an account of 43 occurrences. It indicated that the students did not entirely acquire the rule of forming inflectional morpheme.

From the thorough analysis, it was obtained that the total number of morphological errors found in English students' report text writing was 91 occurrences which are mostly caused by intralanguage error with a total of 77 occurrences. Furthermore, interlanguage error occurs for only 14 times.

Discussion

Following the findings of the study, the researchers suggested taking remediation as the last procedure of EA designed by Gass and Selinker (2008). In relation to the findings of affixes errors, the students were then suggested to pay more attention to attaching the suffix to a base, and be more aware of forming a word by using affixes. Although attaching affixes to its base looks effortless, this study revealed that students need effort for word-formation by attaching affixes necessary in producing English words.

By seeing the derivational morpheme error results, we suggested the students to learn more about the word classes, mainly to word forms having a similar base. The use of derivational morpheme also depends on its use in a sentence context. Therefore, the students also need to recognize the sentence context while using the derivational morpheme. Though it is assumed to be difficult for Indonesian students, more practices perhaps will make them get used to forming derivational morphemes.

Moreover, inflectional morpheme cannot be separated from the properties marking it, such as tense, number, gender, case, and so on. The students should put enough awareness of such properties while producing an English sentence to avoid grammatical errors. Besides, as the interference from L1 may also affect this type of morphological error, the students are suggested to learn more on properties forming inflectional morpheme. Moreover, due to the findings that intralanguage errors mostly caused the errors, students were required to improve their basic language skills, particularly in terms of word-formation.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based on the result of morphological error analysis, we found that the participants still committed making errors in their report text

writings. The students made errors morphologically, as follows: a) in the use of affixes (prefix, suffix, circumfix); b) the use of derivational morpheme; and c) inflectional morpheme. The results of the analysis revealed that intralanguage error caused the most occurring errors. It means that students remained to have inadequate competence in applying standardized English grammar into their writings. Besides, the negative interference from Bahasa Indonesia does not affect the morphological errors they made.

As the last stage in the application of EA procedure, remediation was carried out to enhance the students' L2 competence, particularly in English word formation mastery. It was expected that they could avoid making consistent errors in their writing in the future.

Error analysis methods might differ in the process of implementation. However, the L2 teachers and students must do it in order to gain suitable teaching-learning strategies to be applied in related L2 classroom. Because every L2 classroom probably have different issue in facing the L2 learning process. Therefore, analysis of errors may go beyond the morphological aspects or even beyond the clause and discourse ones. This study is supposed to be referenced for another researcher, linguist, and educator, for their further study on error analysis in learning L2.

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