Updating Status in Facebook: The Interference of English among Users in Academic Context

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the interference of English use made by Facebook users in writing status on their account. The purpose of this study is to discover the interferences and reveal the factors that cause interference on Facebook status. This research uses the descriptive qualitative method to elaborate, describe, and disclose kinds of interference and also the elements of interference that Facebook users produced in updating status. The research showed that the way of the Facebook users in transferring their source language to target language tends to be negative transfer, or it is called language interference. The negative transfers made by Facebook users are semantic and grammatical interference. The factors that cause the interference are bilingualism background, disloyalty target language, limited vocabularies of TL mastered by a learner, prestige, style, interlingual factor, overextension of analogy, and transfer of structure.

1. Introduction

In general, communication is the act of conveying information to create a shared understanding. Communication requires a sender, a message, and a recipient. The communication process is complete if only the receiver has understood the message of the sender. Thus, the message must be comprehensible, so converting information (encoding) will be perfect.

Communication is verbally divided into oral and written communication. Oral communication refers to verbal spoken communication that includes the aspects of interpersonal communication. Otherwise, written communication refers to verbal, written communication. Nowadays, written communication has been rapidly developed along with the development of information and technology. Written communication can be found in social media issues that cover social communication.

It is necessary to create effective communication, so the message of the communication is received well by the recipient. The fact that surprisingly massive majority of the students engage in online aggression does not intend to hurt others' feelings in the wrong way (Hamuddin et al., 2019). However, the idea of sending message sometimes make the communication process ineffective (Rahman, 2017; Nurmawati et al., 2017). The communication process is useful if only the receiver has understood the message of the sender. Thus, the message is necessary to be comprehensible, so converting information will be complete. The

communication will be useful if no interference affects the message that is created by the sender.

Interference is one of the topics discussed in sociolinguistics. It is one of the language phenomena that interferes with communication both in oral and written communication. The term interference comes from language transfer. According to the Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics, transfer language is defined as the one language effect on the learning of another. In other words, language transfer is the effect of a language, usually the first language or mother tongue that the learner mastered, the process of learning another language or the target language.

Facebook is one of the social media that can be used to communicate in written form. Facebook has become popular media to interact with others among social communities. The Facebook features are specified to help people in communicating and gathering information instantly.

Facebook has been used extensively to convey information or express feelings. As a medium for delivering information, users should send information through their Facebook accounts clearly and easily understood by readers. But in fact, many users made language interferences in writing status on their accounts. Therefore, the researchers conducted a study entitled "The Interferences of English Use Made by Facebook Users.

According to Holmes (2001), interference refers to a change in the target language system because of the bilingual speaker's elements of the source language. The definition of language transfer is also described by Brown (2000) Brown as a general term describing the transfer of performance or prior knowledge or from the first language into the next lesson: learning a second language or a foreign language.

The phenomenon of language transfer can be classified into two kinds: positive transfer and negative transfer (Wardhaugh, 2011). Positive transfer occurs when there are similarities between the elements of the first language and the target language, so it is easier for someone to control the target language. The similarities can be divided into similarities in words, sentence structure, and pragmatics. The expression used in a language is the same as or similar to the phrase usage in the target language and certainly appropriate to the context. Meanwhile, negative transfer or interference in the incident when the mother tongue elements interfere with the use of the target language is being learned, while in practice, the previous factor is assigned or misattributed to the target language that is being studied.

Hartman and Strock (1973) stated that interference is a mistake caused by the tendency to pronounce (speech) of a language to another language, including pronunciation in a unit of sounds, grammar, and vocabulary. In other words, the mother tongue and insufficient ability of a person to adapt to a new language that differs in the level of pronunciation units of sound, grammar, and vocabulary are some factors that make different rules of the mother tongue and the target language into one rule. For example, because of the Indonesian language, there are no specific phonemes in English as /æ/ or /a:/, it would be quite difficult for someone to say it. With only one different phoneme, words in English can have different meanings, like in the course of Pronunciation, Phonetics, or Phonology.

Meanwhile, Richard (1985) argues that the interference covers various aspects of language, can absorb in the field of sound structure (phonology), word formation (morphology), sentence structure (syntax), vocabulary (lexicon), and meaning structure (semantics). A similar opinion was also expressed by Dyakov (2008) that the interference is barriers as habit result of mother tongue user (first language) in the mastery of the studied language (second language). Consequently, according to Crystal (2013), there is a transfer or removal of the mother tongue's harmful elements into the target language.

Weinreich (1970) divides language interference into three types, namely: *Phonological interference*. It occurs when bilingual speakers re-translate or re-produce his/ her L1 by using the appropriate phonemes in his L2.; *Lexical interference* occurs when a bilingual speaker uses two or more parts or structures of different languages in a single word or lexicon. *Grammatical interference* occurs when a bilingual speaker identifies morphemes, class of morpheme in language chain in syntaxes, and uses it in the speech act.

Moreover, Dyakov (2008) divides language interference into two classifications: linguistics and extra linguistics principle. From linguistics principle, he subdivides language interference into (1) graphic interference influences the development of writing system as well as the spelling principle of the national orthography in general and separate lexical elements in particular, (2) lexical interference influences the development of vocabulary as well as lexical modernization, (3) phonetic interference influences the phonetic structure of a language, and (4) grammar interference influences the grammar structure of a language.

In general, Wardhaugh and Fuller (2015) classifies language interference into five types i.e.,

Cultural Interference can be expressed in the language used by someone bilingual or bilingual, at least the native language and the target language are being studied. Directly or indirectly, a language closely related to culture because language itself is a part of the culture. Someone's culture will be reflected in language use. As fluent as possible, the target language is used by someone. There will be cultural influences from the mother tongue. Indonesian culture is classified as Eastern culture and very different from the culture of native speakers of English who incidentally is a member of Western culture. Indonesian culture appreciates togetherness and kinship. This culture also values politeness and tolerance for others. As this also mentions in (Sapitri, 2019: Nurmawati: 2019) Of course, politeness will be different very different from culture to culture and the culture of native speakers of English who tend to be individualistic and to the point and appreciate the discipline as the highest.

Semantic interference is interference that occurs in the use of words that have a variable in a language. Semantic interference is where the selection of the Indonesian lexicon affects the choice method for the use of a word and its placement in the English sentence. Semantic interference arises from fundamental differences in meaning between the Indonesian language and English.

Lexical interference should be distinguished from the loanwords (borrowings). Borrowings or integration has fused with a second language, while the interference could not be accepted as part of a second language—the lexical entry of the first

language or a foreign language into a second language that is disturbing.

Phonological interference includes intonation, rhythm, and articulation, pausing. In the sound system of a foreign language, people get that there is an international language that sounds similar to the mother tongue that has the same structure and also has equal distribution. Mastering looks like this happens enough to transfer without any difficulty. But otherwise, people also get sounds that are not part of the sound system of the language itself, whose structure is different or whose distribution is different. The process of mastering the sounds of this kind is slower, and more serious difficulties were encountered. Learners who speak the Indonesian language as a mother tongue and learn English as foreigners will likely transfer the sounds of their language into English sounds.

Grammatical interference involves morphological, phrase logical, and syntactical interference. Syntactic interference occurs at different levels above the word level, for example, in the syntactical structure. It is included the structure of the English sentence that is still referring to the Indonesian language structure. The English words in its structure sound or feels unnatural and strange. The usual case is that someone translated from the Indonesian language to English word by word, which automatically only refers to the meaning of each word, is not the purpose of the sentence as a whole.

There are many factors that cause interference. According to Weinreich (1970), language interference is caused by factors.

a) Speaker Bilingualism Background

Bilingualism is one factor that may cause interference, where other language elements influence the speaker. In this case, the interference of English use is influenced by the Indonesian language structure. Some examples can be seen as follows:

> *I want communication with you*, to say "*Saya ingin berkomunikasi dengan anda*", the correct one is **I want to communicate with you**.

> *Two persons are just silent*, saying "*Ada dua orang yang hanya diam*", while the correct one is **There are two persons who keep silent**.

b) Disloyalty to Target Language (TL)

One of the factors that may cause a negative attitude is because of disloyalty to the target language. Disobedience may occur to target language structure and further force the learner to create ungrammatical words to target language both in oral or written. Learners with limited language background of TL tend to write or speak with their first language structure and sense. For example, an Indonesian user made a Facebook status, namely, "So, I must spirit." In this case, the words are made from the Indonesia language structure and sense. The correct form should be "I must keep my spirit."

c) Limited vocabularies of TL

Vocabularies of a language are mostly words connected to life. Thus, to master another language, a learner will find new terms that differ from his first language words. Vocabularies have a significant role in transferring source language to target language. Learners should have more lexicon for mastering Target Language better. A learner will use his mother tongue words to refer to something that he cannot find in Target Language. For example, Indonesians want to say '*kopiah*', and they still say '*kopiah*' when they use English because there is no particular word in English for '*kopiah*'.

d) Prestige and style

Unfamiliar words tend to be found in communication to get pride. Interference occurs when the receiver cannot catch the real idea of the speech. The uncommon words will be used as a style of the user. In this case, the user sometimes does not understand the real meaning of the speech. One example is the use of derivational affix –ization, while it was known as word borrowing in English that refers to nouns.

From their research, Owu-Ewie and Lomotey (2016) found two other factors that may cause interference.

a) Interlingua factor

Interlingua transfer is an essential source for language learners. In the behaviorist school of learning, it is one concept of contrastive analysis. This concept emphasizes the harmful interference of the first language as the only source of errors. One example of Hindi speakers in uttering the words 'I like to read' they utter '*I read to like*'. In this case, Hindi speakers pre-positioned the use of a verb while in English, it should be positioned. This kind of error results from the negative transfer of first language rules as source language to a second language system as the target language.

b) The overextension of analogy

Learners tend to be wrong in using a vocabulary caused by the similarity of the first language and second language elements. For example, the word 'month' is used to say 'moon' in the space.

Facebook launched in February 2004 as one of the social media that is owned by Facebook Inc. In 2010, Facebook had more than 500 million active users. Facebook users may create a personal profile, add other users as friends, and exchange messages. The

users also get notifications when they update status automatically. Besides, users can join or make groups that are organized by specific characteristics.

Facebook only allows someone at least 13 years old to be a registered user of the website. Mark Zuckerberg, with his friends as Facebook founders, limit the website's membership was firstly limited by the founders for students at Harvard University. It was expanded to other universities before opening to high school students, and the last is for 13 years old and over.

Indra and Hamzah (2018) have researched language style found in the Facebook status by Indonesian Users. The study found the types of language styles and the most common style used by Facebook users in Indonesia. On the analysis, the writer found that there are four language styles namely formal, consultative, casual, and intimate. The casual style is the most language style used by the speakers, with a percentage of about 70%. Furthermore, the writer found that Facebook users mostly use the causes of casualties.

Updating status is one of the major activities for Facebook members. When the Indonesian Facebook users want to update their English status, they sometimes do not realize the errors of the language they have made. Considering the issue above, the researcher was interested in conducting a study to discover the interference created by Facebook users in writing statuses by using English.

2. Method

The method of this research is qualitative descriptive. This method is used to elaborate, describe, and disclose kinds of interference that Facebook users produced in writing status and factors of those interferences following standard Discourse Analysis analysis. The data are Indonesia's Facebook users' status written on their Facebook accounts.

The researchers collect data through camera screenshot or computer print-screen. The next step is note-taking to write the data captured by the screenshot. The data are analyzed based on two research questions. The first is to analyze the types of interference made by the Facebook user. The second is to analyze factors that cause interference on Facebook status. The methods were carried out with the following steps:

The first is the researcher made a transcription of all data from a screenshot of the Facebook users' status. Then, the researcher identified that the interference occurred. Next, the kinds of interference in the data were recorded into the screenshot form. The researcher classified the collect data by tabulating them into a table and describes them. The researcher used descriptive qualitative terms in analyzing the data. The researcher explained the various kinds of interference and factors of interference Source language toward English. The types of interference made by respondents would be classified.

Lastly, the researcher concludes the kinds of interference of Source language toward English use that occurred by Facebook users in updating status. Finally, the factors made by respondents did those kinds of interference.

3. Findings and Discussion

The study's findings and discussions were based on the objective of the study, namely interferences made by Facebook users in updating status and the factors that cause the interferences.

3.1 Interference made by Facebook Users in Updating Status

The interferences made by Facebook users in writing status are shown in the following screenshots (figure 3.1).


Figure 3.1 The First Data

From the above screenshot, it is seen that the Facebook user used the phrase "*young time*" to explain his own experience when he was young. After that, he wrote "*over many of trouble*" to tell that he got many troubles. Then, he wrote, "*that can make we*

cant hope a want" to explain that he could not hope what he wanted to. He also wrote, "*are u agre?*" to ask whether others agree or disagree with what he stated.

The Facebook user wrote a status by transferring his source language to the target language. In this case, the source language is the Indonesian language, while the target language is English. Those interferences involve semantic and grammatical interference. The semantic interference is shown from the selection of the Indonesian lexicon affects the selection of words in the English sentence (*young time*, *over many of*

troble). While the grammatical interference is shown from the use of English words in its structure sounds or feels unnatural (*that can make we cant hope a want*, *are u agre*). The correct one should be:

I met love when I was young, through much trouble. It makes us unable to expect a desire. Do you agree?

19 Mar 2015 pukul 21.00 · 🌐

I became dizzy now

borring

👍 2

Dilihat oleh 48

👍 Suka   ➤ Bagikan
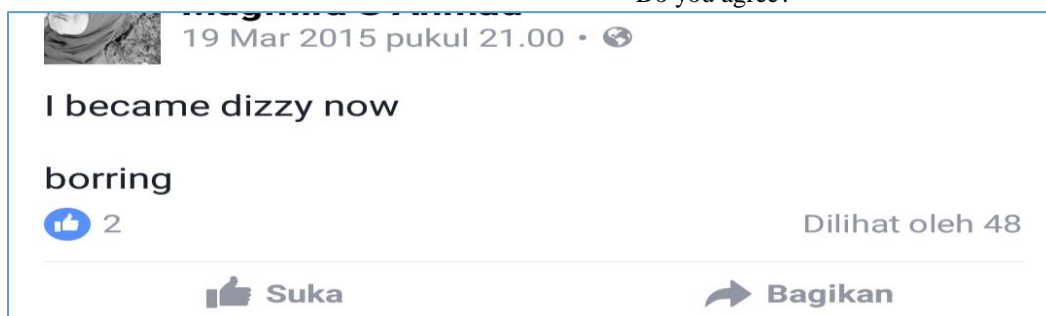
Figure 3.2a The second data

From this data, it is seen that the Facebook user wrote "*became dizzy*" to explain that she was dizzy. She also uses the adverb "*now*" to show the time she was dizzy. After that, she wrote "*borring*" to explain that she was bored.

This Facebook user updated her status by transferring his source language to the target language. In this case, the source language is the Indonesian

language, while the target language is English. The interference involved grammatical interference. The grammatical interference is shown from the use of English words in its structure sounds or feels unnatural and strange. The correct structure of the sentence should be:

I am dizzy now

Boring

27 Apr 2015 pukul 16.45 · 🌐

Don't Choice me . . . !!!
if you not willing loyal . . .
you don't understanding me
my self, who ever broken heart
Love . . . .

👍 8

Dilihat oleh 45

👍 Suka   ➤ Bagikan

Figure 3.2b The second data

The above screenshot showed that the Facebook user wrote "don't choice me…!!!" to show that she did not want to be chosen. Then, she wrote, "if you are not willing loyal" to explain a condition if someone is not loyal. She also stated, "you don't understanding me" to show that someone did not understand her. After that, she wrote, "myself, whoever broken heart" to explain that someone breaks her heart.

The Facebook user updated status by transferring his source language to the target language. In this case, the source language is the Indonesian language, while the target language is English. Those interferences involve semantic and grammatical interference. The semantic

interference is shown from the selection of the Indonesian lexicon affects the selection of words in the English sentence (choice, understanding, broken). The grammatical interference is shown from the use of English words in unnatural structures (if you are not willing to be loyal). The correct one should be:

Don't choose me

If you will not be loyal

You don't understand me

I myself, whoever breaks my heart

Love
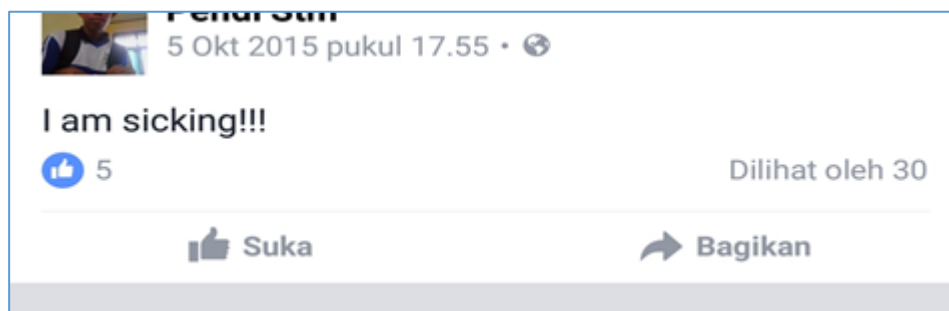
Figure 3.3 The third data

The data shows the Facebook user wrote, "*I am sicking*!!!" to explain that he is sick. In this case, the user used a gerund for adjectives because he thought the word "sick" can be added with "-ing."

The interference involves grammatical interference, where the use of English words in its structure is unnatural and strange. The correct one should be:

I am sick.
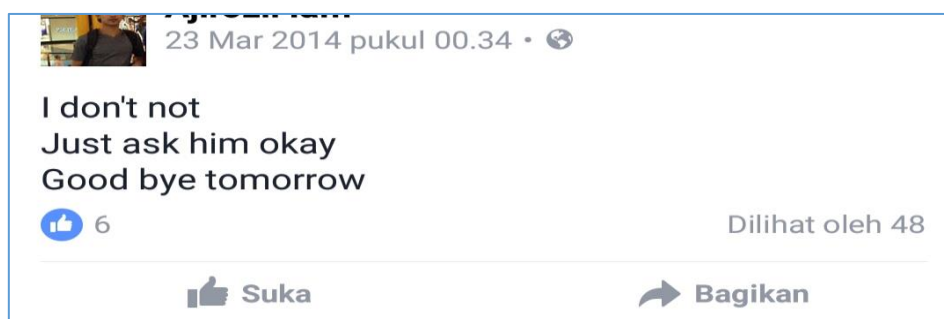
Figure 3.4 The fourth data

It is seen that the Facebook user wrote, "*I don't*" to explain that he doesn't know. Then, he wrote "*goodbye tomorrow*" to say he will see someone tomorrow.

The Facebook user transferred his source language to the target language. In this case, the source language is the Indonesian language, while the target language is English. That interference involves grammatical interference. The correct one should be:

I don't know

Just ask him okay

See you tomorrow

3.2 Factors that Cause Language Interference

From the interferences made by Facebook users above, it is found that Facebook users tend to make semantic and grammatical interference. It caused their bilingualism background, disloyalty target language, limited vocabularies of TL, and prestige and style.

a) Speaker Bilingualism Background

Facebook users tend to make grammatical interference because of their bilingualism background. The data showed that users tend to use the Indonesian language structure in writing status by using English.

b) Disloyalty to Target Language

It is found that Facebook users tend to be disloyalty to the target language in writing status. It is seen from Facebook status made by an Indonesian user in the 4th data. Instead of saying "I am sick", the user said "I am sicking".

c) The limited vocabularies of TL

The first screenshot shows that the Facebook user uses inappropriate word to change the word he did not know. The user wrote 'young time' to explain when he was young. The user made semantic meaning because of the limited vocabulary of English.

d) Prestige and style

From one of the screenshots, a Facebook user stated, "Goodbye tomorrow," while the correct one

should be "See you tomorrow." In this case, the user made grammatical interference with his style.

e) The Interlingua factor

Interlingua factor can be seen in the 3rd data construction, "if you will not be loyal" was written as "*if you not willing loyal*" by the Facebook user, where 'not' is pre-positioned. In English structure, it should be post positioned after the modal. This type of error is grammatical interference made by the Facebook user because of the different systems of the first language (Indonesian) and the second language (English).

f) The overextension of analogy

Indonesian learners may make a mistake by using a noun as a verb. The 3rd data shows that the word "choice" in "*Don't choose me*" is an incorrect form because it is a noun. The user should use a verb, namely "choose" to tell the expression.

g) Transfer of structure

One of the screenshots found the words "I became dizzy now" that should be written as "I am dizzy now." It is a kind of negative transfer made by the Facebook user because of old habits that are different from the new behavior that is learned.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, it is found that the way Facebook users transfer their source language to target language tends to be a negative transfer or is called language interference. The negative transfers made by Facebook users are mostly semantic and grammatical interference. It should be said that language interference is directly related to the place attributed to the mother tongue in the foreign language system. The mother tongue has established the learners' language world and has acquainted students with the problems of language phenomena. Therefore it is the mother tongue that will enable them to acquire a new language world.

The interference is bilingualism background, disloyalty target language, limited vocabularies of TL, prestige, style, Interlingua factor, overextension of analogy, and transfer of structure.

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