
Students' Grammatical Errors Made in Speaking English at English Department in UINSU

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ABSTRACT

The awareness of using standardized structures and rules in using English especially in speaking is very important for the students who learn English as a second language besides their mother tongue. This study is aimed to find out the types of students' grammatical errors in speaking English in the English Department in UINSU. The qualitative method was used in this research. The source of the data is the documentation from the recorded file of interview foreigners from the students who studied in the English Department in UINSU. The total number of students is ten students. Then, this data was collected and analyzed based on the theory of Two Dulay (1982). From the data collection, it was found that there are five types of grammatical errors in their speaking such as omission, misformation, misordering, over-regulation, and addition. The highest percentage for these errors was addition 29.5 % followed by misformation 25 %, omission 18.1 %, over-generalization 15.9 % respectively and the lowest one was misordering 11.3 % to be the causes of these errors were intralingual and interlingual factors.

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I. INTRODUCTION

In learning English, from the four language skills, speaking is the most difficult skill to achieve. Speaking is considered the most difficult one because it requires the students to master grammar, contents, forms, and pronunciation (Chania & Amri, 2019). Practically speaking happens in real-time spontaneously. It forces the students to produce the utterances in the target language directly. It can be seen from classroom activities like asking questions, clarifying understanding, expressing opinions, and group discussions. Thornbury (2005) as cited in Lai-Mei Leong (2017), learners' correct use of grammatical structures requires the length and complexity of the utterances and well-structured clauses. It is unavoidable that they made many errors. However, references have shown that grammatical errors are common in foreign or second language learning. This is the manifestation of the first and foreign-language gap, which is considered too significant. As R. Ellis (1994) also stated, "errors reflect gaps in a learner's knowledge; they occur because the learner does not know what is correct structure."

People do make mistakes and errors while speaking a foreign or second language. Given that not all the incorrect grammatical uttered by students were referred to errors, it is necessary to differentiate between errors and mistakes made by students. Rod Ellis (1997) points out that errors are gaps in learners' knowledge due to lack of competence (They do not know what is

correct); mistakes are occasional lapses in performance (learners unable to perform what they know). Furthermore, according to Dulay (1982), a mistake refers to a performance error that is either a random guess or “slip”. It is a failure to utilize an available system correctly. An error is caused by the learners who are incompetent and usually unable

Many definitions of grammatical error can be found in various studies. (R. Ellis, 1994), for example, defines errors as deviations from the target language. Meanwhile, Tsui assessed the error in the grammar in the class as (1) something that the lecturer rejected because it was wrong or not correct, (2) something that the lecturer did not want, or (3) something that was not under the rules the lecturer intended (Tsui, 1995). Errors are defective forms of speech that appear regularly in the language of learners. They are considered wrong because they violate the norms of language. To refer to the grammatical error feature, Selinker (1972) as cited in Giri (2010) uses the term 'interlanguage', which signifies the gap between the mother tongue and the structure of the target language in the learners' speech.

The previous research results of errors analysis studies showed various types and causes of errors made by students. For example, Helmanda et al., (2018) research in Tarbiyah Faculty of Muhammadiyah University, Aceh; found four types of grammatical errors that classified into omission, misformation, disorder, and overgeneralization. In errors of omission, the students mostly omitted the use of verbs, subject, object, prepositions, plural nouns, articles, conjunctions, superlatives form, passive verbs, and to be.

Errors can be classified into several types. In the book *Language Two* Dulay (1982) classified errors into four classes; error based on linguistic category (phonology, syntax and morphology, semantics and lexicons, and discourse), error based on surface strategy taxonomy (Omission, Addition, Misformation, and Misordering), error based on comparative taxonomy (development errors, intra-language errors, ambiguous errors, other errors), and error based on communicative effect taxonomy (global errors, local errors).

Furthermore, (Brown, 1994) stated that there are four sources of error in language, namely, first, Interlingual Error, which means errors associated with the original language (L1); and second, Intralingual Error, which is an error caused by a misunderstanding of the language being studied (L2). Errors are preceded by students who do not reflect the mother tongue's structure but generalizations based on partial exposure to the target language. Students try to ignore the actual rules, thus developing incompatible hypotheses with their mother tongue and target language. Furthermore, the learning context refers to the lecturer's classroom situation where this situation can encourage students to make wrong hypotheses about language.

Based on the experience of the researcher, it was observed that the fourth-semester students in the English department of UINSU were having problems in speaking English. Practically the students can use oral communication fluently but tend to be less accurate; they often speak using less structured language. When speaking, students generally did not realize and understand the classification of errors they were making. Thus, it is deemed necessary to identify, classify, and describe the various grammatical errors and their causes as an attempt to build their awareness of using structured and standardized English rules. As Simbolon, (2015) stated, concerning the crucial existing errors, research, in this case, is important to describe the types of grammatical errors in speaking made by the students together with their sources and causes. Therefore, the current research purposes were to describe; (1) the types of grammatical errors made by students in speaking; (2) the most common error made by students; and (3) the cause of why those errors were made.

II. METHODS

This research type was the descriptive qualitative approach and the research's objectives as identifying types of grammatical errors, highlighting the most common errors, and describing the cause of the errors. The instruments of the research were observation, interview, and document analysis. The data source used for the analysis resulted from the fourth-semester

students' speaking performance in the English Department of UINSU. 10 students participated in this research. To be the topic for the students is making an interview with foreigners. This topic was chosen because most students would like to have practice speaking English with a native speaker.

All recorded transcriptions of student speaking performance were analyzed to identify each sentence with grammatical errors. This process is part of the analysis that requires a lot of time and in-depth investigation because every sentence with grammatical errors must be codified. As the concept of error analysis proposed by Crystal (1987), the error is a technique for identifying, classifying, and systematically interpreting the unacceptable forms produced by someone learning a foreign language, using linguistically provided principles and procedures. Then, the data collection was analyzed using the theory proposed by Two Dulay (1982) like addition, overgeneralization, misformation, misordering, and omission.

Next, to know the most common errors, the formula used was as follows:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100 \%$$

Description:

P = percentage of errors

F = Frequency of the errors N = Total number of errors

The causes of the errors were based on Brown's (1994) four sources of errors, such as Interlingual Error (L1); Intralingual Error (L2); Learning context and method; and Communication Strategy. Therefore, based on the Brown (1994) theory, an interview was conducted to reveal the cause of the errors made by students. By analyzing and providing descriptions, some recommendations and future pedagogical implications are expected to be presented.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Through speaking performance transcription, then the researcher analyzed the data provided by identifying, classifying, and describing the student grammatical errors. After several analysis stages, the researcher found that all students showed some problems in conveying meaning by using correct grammar. From the total number of 10 students who participated in the research, there were 44 errors committed, such as addition 13 errors, overgeneralization 7 errors, misformation 11 errors, misordering 5 errors, and ordering 8 errors.

From the data shown above, it is understood that the number of student errors is very high. We can see the grammar errors classification by grouping the types, examples, and frequency of these errors. Based on the Surface Strategy Taxonomy, the results of the analysis show that there were five types of errors found.

From the data display above, we can see several types and the percentage of each error that was found in students speaking performance. The data tabulation shows that the error, in addition, gets the highest value, namely 13 or 29.5%, next is misformation with 11 errors or 25 %, then followed by omission with 8 errors or 18.1 %, over-generalization with 7 errors or 15.9 %, and the last misordering with 5 errors or 11.3%. Additionally, it can be concluded that the category of the most common error made was misused or misplacing of verbs, nouns, conjunctions, pronouns, and prepositions. To make the data clearer, the categories and sub-categories of grammatical errors are presented in the

IV. CONCLUSION

The writer also concludes that the most common error for students is grammar in addition to 13 errors or 29.5%, and it is caused by the first language and carelessness of it is

caused by the first language and carelessness of students. Next was misformation with 11 errors or 25% categories of verbs, nouns, conjunctions, pronouns, and prepositions caused by the student's first language and overgeneralization. Next is the error in omission, with 8 errors or 18.1 % caused by students' carelessness. the teaching method and student translation. Then, over-generalization, there were about 7 errors with 15.9 % caused by carelessness and their first language. There is also a type of misordering error caused by teaching method and student translation with 5 errors or 11.3 %. The errors they made were caused by the intralingual factors, including omission, overgeneralization, and misformation in the categories of verbs, nouns, conjunctions, pronouns, and prepositions. Additionally, the interlingual factors are misordering and addition in the category of overuse of prepositions and incorrect word order, which were based on their first language transfer. The last cause was the monotonous learning environment that causes anxiety in which they used the L1-based communication strategies that triggers grammatical errors.

Finally, this result suggests some valuable suggestions for strengthening and improving the method of teaching grammar classes, particularly for students to understand more comprehensive grammar rules. Teachers should use this finding to develop a program to improve grammar skills in various aspects and create more meaningful classroom activities to improve student grammar and encourage them to use it to communicate. Teachers should provide a friendly learning atmosphere so that the students will feel comfortable learning to speak English. In addition, teachers should know when and how to correct their learners' errors and mistakes and encourage them not to be afraid of making errors and mistakes. For further researchers, these study results are expected to provide new insights for future researchers about the urgency of re-evaluating student difficulties in using grammar. Then, this could be a new issue for in-depth research to present more valuable recommendations for teaching grammar.

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