A MORPHOLOGICAL ERRORS ANALYSIS IN DESCRIPTIVE TEXTS WRITTEN BY THE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed to find out the types of morphological errors in descriptive texts and the causes of the errors. The research type was error analysis research. The techniques of collecting the data were written test and documentation. The subject of this research was the first-grade students of SMK Ma'arif NU 2 Ajibarang. The data gathered were analyzed using several relevant theories. The data analysis revealed that there were six types of morphological error called third-person singular error, article error, omission of noun plural, additional of noun plural, inflectional error, and possessive case error. Furthermore, the possible causes of the errors were incomplete of rule restriction, ignorance of the rule restriction, interlingual error, and carelessness.

Keywords: error analysis; morphological errors; writing; descriptive text.

INTRODUCTION

In English, writing skill is one of the productive skills, and it is essential for every English learner. According to Brink (2020), for hundreds of years, writing has been a tool that has helped individuals communicate, inform, collaborate, and remind others, while society benefits from written history, culture, and knowledge. Jacobs (2019) states that writing is something that many of us do almost every day. Writing is used in a variety of contexts, including work, business, science, technology, entertainment, and others. According to Gayo & Widodo (2018), writing

plays an important role in qualifying students' achievement in language learning. According to Graham et al., (2012), writing is a powerful tool for influencing others and an indispensable tool for learning; they use writing to gather, preserve, and transmit information widely.

Students in the educational field must learn several texts such as descriptive, narrative, procedure, report, news items, analytical exposition, persuasive exposition, spoof, explanation, discussion, and review. Students in the first grade learn descriptive text in senior high school. Descriptive text is essential to learn because it is used to convey information. In Anggun (2016), Gerot & Wignell argue that descriptive text is a type of text with the purpose of delivering information. According to Rass (2001), a successful description will include sufficient and varied elaboration of details to convey a sense of the described thing. The sensory details are frequently chosen to show what the writer sees, hears, smells, touches, and tastes. Descriptive text is one of the texts that are often used in human daily activities (Rianda, 2020; Napitupulu, 2016).

The students are expected to be able to create simple oral and written descriptive texts about people, tourist attractions, and famous historical buildings when writing descriptive texts. When students describe those subjects, they must use a variety of words, including nouns, verbs, adjectives, pronouns, and propositions. According to Yuyun et al., (2016), words are used to describe the characteristics and features of the subject. Based on the syllabus for English subjects in high school, students are also expected to be able to write descriptive texts by paying attention to the purpose of the text, the structure of the text, and using linguistic elements correctly and in context.

Morphology is part of the linguistic element previously mentioned. It is the sub-discipline of linguistics dealing with such patterns. Booij (2007) states that the word morphology can be utilized in two ways: it refers to a sub-discipline of linguistics, but it may moreover be utilized to refer to that part of the grammar of a language that contains the rules for inflection and word-formation, that's the word linguistic use. Booij (2007) also explains that morphology as a sub-discipline of linguistics points to satisfactory language description, the improvement of an appropriate language typology, and at contributing to talks about the organization of grammar and the mental representation of linguistic competence.

Morphology is important in learning a language, especially English because if there are errors in writing words and forms, it can lead to wrong or different meanings. Fasold & Connor-

Linton (2006) state that languages vary widely in their amount and functions of morphology. For example, all languages need a way to express grammatical roles, such as subject and direct object (or who does what to whom). English depends quite strictly on the order of words in a sentence to do this. They also give an example in sentences: a) Brutus killed Caesar, b) Caesar killed Brutus. The meaning of the first sentence is very different from the second one. One of the most important functions of morphology is to distinguish the roles played by the various participants in an event; we could not interpret language without this information. In short, if people or students write the text and make morphological errors, it can be a big problem, because it can change the meaning and the reader may get the wrong understanding so that the information cannot be conveyed properly.

The importance of error analysis study is undeniable. Jabeen et al., (2015) state that error analysis is a very important area of applied linguistics and of the second and foreign language learning. According to Aniuranti et al., (2020), error analysis is an activity used to understand student errors so that those can be handled or anticipated. Furthermore, Al-Khresheh (2016) argues that the results of error analysis can be used as consideration in the feedback system of the teaching-learning process. Al Zoubi (2018) explains that error analysis is considered an important technique for obtaining information about learners' language.

Indonesian students commonly do morphological errors in their writing. A study conducted by Saputri (2017) found that there were 97 morphological errors made by the students in writing descriptive texts. Saputri (2017) focused on Morphology and Syntactical error in students' writing at Private Vocational High schools. The method employed for data analysis was Surface Strategy Taxonomy. The other previous research is Gayo & Widodo (2018). They found that there were morphological and syntactical errors in descriptive texts written by the students. Gayo & Widodo focused on Morphology and Syntactical error. Mutmainah (2019) also found that there are 76 errors; those are 55 misselections of verb morphology error, 12 omission of verb past tense {–ed}, 5 misselections of adjective morphology error, 2 omission of noun plural {–s}, and 1 misselection of adverb morphology error and 1 misselection of noun morphology error. Her subject was Junior High School Students. Mutmainah (2019) focused on recount text and classified errors based on James' theory.

In this research, there are some differences from the previous research such as in limitations of the research, the type of the text, the subject of the research, and the research analysis method.

The previous studies used surface strategy taxonomy theory as the data analysis method. In this research, the researchers analyzed the data using some relevant theories. The researchers classified the errors with the usage of the Linguistic Category Taxonomy (Dulay et al., 1982) and Morphological Taxonomy (James, 1998). Then, the causes were analyzed using Brown (2007), Richards (1971), and Norrish (1983). In short, this study can give some benefits for EFL study. Besides, this research has two objectives called classifying the types of error and identifying the causes of those errors.

METHOD

The study was error analysis research of morphological errors made by the students in the first-grade of SMK Ma'arif NU 2 Ajibarang. According to Ellis in Al-Khresheh (2016), there are several stages in error analysis study. They are as: (1) "collection of a sample of learner language, (2) identification of errors, (3) description of errors, and (4) explanation of errors". In this research, there were some stages employed. The first phase in collecting the data was asking students to write descriptive texts. Besides, the researchers asked the descriptive text written by the students. Therefore, the techniques used to collect the data were test and documentation. The second step was analyzing the data by classifying the types of error that appeared in the texts into several categories and identifying the source or cause of the errors. The researchers classified the errors with the usage of the Linguistic Category Taxonomy (Dulay et al., 1982) and Morphological Taxonomy (James, 1998). Then, the causes were analyzed using Brown (2007), Richards (1971), and Norrish (1983). The last stage was presenting the result through words and tables.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

1. **Type of Errors**

   a. **Article Error**

      The first kind of error was article error. The students used incorrect articles or do not use any article when it is required in their writing. In this case, student 6 and 8 used incorrect articles in their writing. They used article *an* in front of words with a consonant sound.

Student	Error	Correction
S-6	1) Erul is **an** handsome and brave man 2) He is **an** funny person.	1) Erul is **a** handsome and brave man 2) He is **a** funny person.
S-8	1) Tsukishima Kei is **an** character like in Haikyuu. 2) He is **an** volleyball player.	1) Tsukishima Kei is **a** character like in Haikyuu. 2) He is **a** volleyball player.

b. Possessive Case Error

The possessive noun case is used for showing possession (ownership) with the addition of *-'s* or sometimes just the apostrophe ('), for example: a student's book or the students' books. Possessive case error occurs when the writer shows possession (ownership) without the addition of -'s or apostrophes. In this research, the researchers found that Student 22 made an error in possessive noun case.

Error	Correction
1) My grandma live next door to **my mother house**.	1) My grandma live next door to **my mother's house**.

c. Third-Person Singular Error

In English grammar, the third-person singular verb suffix is the {-s} or -es suffix which is conventionally added to the base form of verbs in the present tense when following the singular subject in the third person (for example, "He waits and watches". The researchers found that four students made errors in third-person singular verbs.

Student	Error	Correction
S-8	1) He has an annoying nature, namely as an ghosting which **make** all his friend emotional 2) He also really **like** dinosaurus.	1) He has an annoying nature, namely as an ghosting which **makes** all his friend emotional 2) He also really **likes** dinosaurus.
S-22	1) My grandma **live** next door to my mother house. 2) He always **give** me money	1) My grandma **lives** next door to my mother house. 2) He always **gives** me money
S-25	1) He **come** from Darma Keradenan 2) He **like** jail	1) He **comes** from Darma Keradenan 2) He **likes** jail
S-27	1) Sometime he **like** to make salting.	1) Sometime he **likes** to make salting.

	2) He is a first men who **want** to find my parents.	2) He is a first men who **wants** to find my parents.

d. Omission of Plural-Noun

The next type of error found was omission. This type of error happens because the learners have not understood the grammar rules well. In this research, the researchers found that four students made error in writing plural nouns, they omitted or deleted suffix {–s} in their nouns that is plural.

Students	Error	Correction
S-5	1) . . . taking care of me until I was a **16 year old**.	1) . . . taking care of me until I was a **16 years old**.
S-8	1) . . . which make **all his friend** emotional	1) . . . which make **all his friends** emotional
S-22	1) He is about **seventy year old**.	1) He is about **seventy years old**.
S-25	1) One of **the thing** that got me excited	1) One of **things** that got me excited

e. Addition Plural-Noun

Irregular plural nouns are nouns that do not become plural by adding {-s} or {-es}, as most nouns in the English language do. Addition is a type of error that happens when the students add an unnecessary word/phrase. In this case, the researchers found two students added the suffix {–s} in irregular plural nouns.

Students	Error	Correction
S-7	1) My sister is the elder of four **childrens**. 2) The third **childs** of five siblings.	1) My sister is the elder of four **children**. 2) The third **child** of five siblings.
S-8	1) He has blonde **hairs**.	1) He has blonde **hair**.

f. Inflection Error

In English there are derivative and inflectional morphemes. Derivative morphemes can change word formation and meaning by adding affixes or suffixes, for example, "activity (noun)" comes from "activity (adjective) + activity (suffix)". The inflectional morpheme means that adding a suffix does not change the meaning of word formation. For

example, "books (noun)" comes from "book (noun) + s (suffix)", which is still a noun. In this case, the researchers found that two students made errors in inflectional morphemes. They failed to attach {–s}. Student 5 put -d at the end of plural nouns instead of putting {–s}. While Student 8 misplaced the suffix {–s}.

Students	Error	Correction
S-5	1) I have a friend named Fathi 20 **yeard old**. 2) My mother's name is Sri Mulyani 45 **yeard old.**	1) I have a friend named Fathi 20 **years old**. 2) My mother's name is Sri Mulyani 45 **years old.**
S-8	1) He is 16 **year olds**.	1) He is 16 **years old**.

2. Cause of Error

a. Third-Person Singular Error

Third-person singular error occurs when the students do not add suffix {-s} or {-es} to the third-person singular verbs. In this study, the possible cause of this error was **incomplete of the rule restriction**. Incomplete of the rule restriction is one of intralingual error that occurs when the learner fails to fully develop the specific structures needed to produce acceptable sentences. This type of error appears when the student fails to learn more complex types of structures because he realizes he can achieve communication by using relatively simple rules.

b. Article Error

Article error is error found when a student uses an incorrect article or does not use an article when it is required. The students used article ***an*** in the front of the word begin with a consonant sound. The possible cause of it was **ignorance of the rule restriction**. In this type of error, the learner failed to observe the restriction of the existing structure. The learner ignored the rule restrictions of the word begin with consonant sound that is always followed by article *"a"* not *"an"*. The learners mostly tend to generalize syntactic rules, and they have previously learned, ignoring the rule.

c. Omission of Plural Noun

Omission of plural nouns occurred when students wrote a sentence with a plural noun but did not put suffix {–s} or {–es}. The researchers found that four students made the errors in writing plural nouns. They omitted or deleted suffix {–s} in their nouns that are plural. The possible cause of it is **interlingual error**. An interlingual error existed as the result of the mother tongue's interference. Interlingual errors are commonly found in the first stage of learning the target language. It occurs when learners did not acquire a system of target language well. When talk about age, Indonesian says 3 *tahun*, 16 *tahun*, 70 *tahun*. No indicator says that those are plural noun. It also works with word *"all"* in S-8's sentence. Indonesian sometimes do not need plural noun when they say *"all" / semua* because that one word *"semua"* has meant all of them / all of the things / more than one so Indonesian people do not add plural word after it.

d. Addition of Plural Noun

Addition is a type of error that happens when the students add an unnecessary word/phrase and in this case, the researchers found two students that added suffix {–s} in irregular plural nouns. The possible cause of it is **carelessness**. Carelessness is the error caused by less inspiration of the students while they learn a foreign language or the uninteresting material that makes students less enthusiastic about learning the language. In short, this error occurred because the students had not clearly understood the structure of word.

e. Inflection Error

Inflection error appears when the student fails or misplaces to put suffix {–s}. The possible cause of it was **carelessness**. Carelessness is the error caused by less inspiration of the students while they learn a foreign language or the uninteresting material that makes students less enthusiastic about learning the language. Student 5 put -d at the end of plural nouns instead of putting {–s} which means he failed to put -s. While student 8 misplaced the suffix {–s}, he wrote "*year olds*" instead of "years old". Both of them already know

about plural nouns but they made the same error. They cannot put the {–s} correctly so the possible cause of the error is carelessness.

f. Possessive Case Error

The last error was possessive case error. Possessive case error occurs when writer shows possession (ownership) without addition of -'s or apostrophes. The possible cause of this error was **interlingual error**. Interlingual errors are commonly found in the first stage of learning the target language. It occurs when learners did not acquire a system of target language well. In this case, student wrote "*my mother house.*" instead of "*my mother's house.*" The student used Indonesian linguistic system, therefore the possible cause of this error is interlingual error.

Discussion

Third-Person Singular Error

Third-person singular error is stated as morphological error in Linguistic Category Taxonomy and James' Morphological Error Taxonomy. This error occurred when students used third-person singular but omitted or deleted {–s} and {–es} at the end of the verb agreement. For example: *He still look healthy*. In this sentence, the student omitted {–s} morpheme in the verb *look*s because the subject is the third-person singular. The absence of that grammatical item indicated an error. The well-formed sentence should be *he still looks healthy*.

This error often appears in student writing. Munir (2020) found that in the omission of verb inflection, the students omitted {–s} marker for third-person singular present frequently. Masrudin (2019) also argue that students made omission of verb inflection {–s/-es} errors in the percentage of 25% from 47.05% errors of omission. Jayanti (2019) did research about students' writing ability in writing descriptive texts, and she found that most of the student did third-person singular error.

The cause of this type of error was incomplete of the rule restriction. Jayanti (2019) also stated that the error might be caused by a factor in which the students do not know the basic structure of simple present tense itself and many students. In short, the possible cause of third-person singular error is incomplete of the rule restriction. Incomplete of the rule restriction is one of intralingual errors that occurs when the learner fails to fully develop the specific structures needed to produce acceptable sentences.

Article Error

Article error is included in one of morphological errors and called an *indefinite article incorrect* in Linguistic Category Taxonomy. This error is found when students use an incorrect article or do not use an article when it is required in their writing. For example: *He is an volleyball player*. The article *an* before volleyball is an error because the word volleyball is a word that begins with a consonant sound. It should be *he is a volleyball player*.

This error often appears in student writing. Sholihatun (2017) said that there were 105 errors in English articles found in students' descriptive writing. Gayo & Widodo (2017) also did an error analysis of morphology and syntactical error and found that there were total 39 article errors with percentage 13.18% in students' writing. Yuliawati, et al. (2020) did an analysis of the type of error on articles in students' writing descriptive text and found out that there are 41% omission articles errors, 26% addition articles errors, misformation errors as much as 24%, and misordering error which was found in students' writing as much as 9%.

For the cause of error, Yuliawati, et al. (2020) stated that students are still confused about how to use *a* and *an* before unspecific nouns. That statement strengthens the researcher's analysis of the cause of the possible cause of article error, that is ignorance of the rule restriction. Ignorance of the rule restriction means students failed to observe the restriction of existing structure. The students ignored the rule restrictions of word begin with consonant sound that is always followed by article *"a"* not *"an"*.

Omission of Plural-Noun

Omission of plural-noun is one of morphological errors that is stated in James' morphological error taxonomy as noun morphology error. This error happened when students omitted or deleted {–s} at the end of plural-noun. For example : *he is 17 year old*. The student omitted {–s} at the end of word *year*. The correct form of that sentence is *he is 17 years old*.

This error occurred in students' writing. Saputri (2017) conducted error analysis of morphological and syntactical errors in descriptive text and found out that in this error category, there was 14 omission of plural-noun made by the students. Those errors are made by 13 participants. Nofriyani (2018) in her thesis about error analysis of plural-noun form, found out that

there was 20.8% omission of plural-noun error in students' writing. Munir (2020) did morphological error analysis and found that the students omitted 38 errors of noun inflection.

For the cause of error, Munir (2020) said that students failed to come up with a well-formed grammatical sentence with the absence of inflectional morpheme {−s} of plural. The error may happen because of the different structure between Bahasa Indonesia and English so the students got difficulties in acquiring the language. The possible cause of it is interlingual error because absence of this kind of function in Indonesian is the main reason for the occurrence of this error.

Additional of Plural-Noun

Addition of plural-noun is one of morphological errors that is stated in James' morphological error taxonomy as noun morphology error. This error occurred when students added {−s} at the end of irregular plural-noun. For example: *she takes care of 3 childrens*. The student added {−s} at the end of the word *children* is an error because children were already plural. The correct form of that sentence is *she takes care of 3 children*.

This error appeared in students' writing. Gayo & Widodo (2018) found out there was 13 additional error of plural-noun in students' descriptive text. Rahmatika (2020) in her morphological error analysis also found there was 8.48% error in addition of noun-plural. Munir (2020) stated he found 9 errors in the noun inflection.

For the cause of error, Nofriyani (2019) stated that in addition of plural-noun the students added the utterance which is not needed in a word or the student add some unnecessary element and this error occurred because the students had not clearly understood the structure of word. This statement strengthens the researcher's analysis of the possible cause of error addition plural-noun. Students had not clearly understood the structure of words because they didn't pay attention to the teacher's explanation. That was the reason why the researcher stated that carelessness is the possible cause of it.

Inflectional Error

Inflectional error is type of morphological error that is found by the researcher in this research. According to Afthoniyah (2012), morphology can be used in two ways: it refers to the subdiscipline of linguistics, but it can also be used to refer to the grammatical part of a language that contains the rules for inflection and word formation, i.e. word grammar. Inflectional

morphemes refer to morphemes that do not change category and do not create new lexemes, but rather change the form of lexemes so that they fit into different grammatical contexts or meanings. According to the above statement, inflectional error included morphological error that occurred when students used inflectional morphemes that are not in accordance with the rules. For this case, this error can be called a misplacement. Misplacement is one of the categories of error from James (1998) and it occurred when students couldn't put the grammar rules in the right place. For example: *he is 24 year olds*. The right form is *he is 24 years old*, and the suffix –s should be put at the end of the word year to emphasize that the noun is plural.

The possible cause of this error is carelessness. The analysis is strengthened by the statement from Pradana and Fauzan (2021) that error inflection happened because the students were not able to distinguish the use and the place of inflection "-s" in plural form.

Possessive Case Error

Possessive case error is one of morphological errors stated in Linguistic Category Taxonomy and is called possessive case incorrect. This error happened when students omitted -'s marker of possession form. For example: *Qia house*. The right form of it is *Qia's house*.

This error occurred in students' writing. Munir (2020) said in the omission of noun inflection, which occurred more frequently, the students omitted {–s} marker of possession form. Saputri (2017) also found out that students did errors in possessive case, she stated that there were 4 errors made by the students in her research. Kusumawardhan (2017) in her research found there were 4 errors or 20% omission of the apostrophe –'s when they wrote possessive case. Meilia, et al., (2013) found out there was 20 or 4.65% omission of possessive.

The possible cause of it was interlingual error. Fachruroji (2010) conducted an error analysis on students' difficulties and concluded that errors in possessive case could happen because of interlingual. It is an error that results from language transfer that is caused by the learner's native language. An interlingual error existed as the result of the mother tongue's interference. Interlingual errors are commonly found in the first stage of learning the target language. It occurs when learners did not acquire a system of target language well.

CONCLUSIONS

An error analysis study plays significant role in EFL context. Therefore, there are many researchers conducted to explore more about error analysis. In this research, the researchers found six types of morphological errors in descriptive texts written by the first-grade students of SMK Ma'arif NU 2 Ajibarang. They were article error, possessive case error, third-person-singular error, omission plural-noun, addition plural-noun, and misplaced plural-noun. The possible causes of those errors were incomplete of the rule restriction, ignorance of the rule of restriction, interlingual error, and carelessness.

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