THE ANALYSIS OF MORPHOLOGICAL ERRORS MADE BY THE VIII GRADE STUDENTS IN WRITING A DESCRIPTIVE PARAGRAPH AT SMPN 4 JEMBER IN THE 2013/2014

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Abstract

This research was a descriptive quantitative research on the analysis of morphological errors made by the VIII grade students in writing a descriptive paragraph at SMPN 4 Jember in the 2013/2014. The sample of this research was taken 15% from six classes of VIII grade students by proportional random sampling by using lottery. Thus, the number of the samples was 30 students. There were three ways of data collection methods applied in this research. They were, writing test, interview, and documentation. Furthermore, there were some steps applied in analyzing the errors in this research: (1) collecting error data, (2) identifying error data, (3) tabulating the error data, (4) classifying and explaining the error data, and (5) counting the error data. Based on the result of the analysis data, the VIII grade students of SMPN 4 Jember in the 2013/2014 academic year made morphological errors in the category of morphological inflection errors, namely: (1) possessive inflection errors as many as 22 errors (20.00%), (2) plural inflection errors as many as 18 errors (16.36%), (3) the third person singular verb inflection errors as many as 44 errors (40.00%), (4) present participle inflection errors as many as 16 errors (14.54%), (5) comparative inflection errors as many as 1 error (0.90%), (6) superlative inflection errors as many as 1 error (0.90%), and (7) derivational morpheme errors as many as 8 errors (7.27%). The most morphological errors made by the students in their paragraph writing was the third person singular verb inflection errors as many as 44 errors or 40.00%. Thus, it could be said that the VIII grade students of SMPN 4 Jember still made some morphological errors in their descriptive paragraph writing.

Keywords: Analysis, morphological errors, descriptive paragraph, writing skill

Introduction

English is a compulsory subject in Indonesian Educational system that must be learnt by Indonesian students. It is used to control the passing and the graduation requirement for the students. In fact, the students cannot pass the class if his or her grade in English is below six. Then, he or she cannot graduate from the school if the grade of the English subject in his or her final exam is below four. To pass the class, the students must have good ability in writing English. In writing skill, especially for the students in the VIII grade, they are not only demanded to have a good ability in understanding the English grammar, but they also have to be able to write a good composition.

Moreover, many Indonesian students think that in English, there are some rules that are totally different from Indonesian written that make them get confused. For example, the rules of English grammar on the use of simple present tense, the third singular person, the verb changes in the tense, and the plural nouns. Those forms of grammatical rules do not exist in Indonesian written. Therefore, there is a serious case among the students who still do not understand well those kinds of rules, especially for junior high school students. Even they have already learned some English rules from the textbooks or the teacher's explanation. In fact, there are errors that still occur in their writing. After taking a look into some phenomena in learning the second language, the researcher was interested in researching the types of errors that occur in junior high school students' English composition. The researcher wanted to focus on revealing the case of morphological errors based on the Surface Strategy Taxonomy.

According to Dulay *et al.* (1982:138), error is the part of conversation or composition that deviate from some selected norms of mature language performance. It can be classified into two kinds, the first is error *based on the source*, and these errors are caused by some factors such as fatigue and inattention when using the target language in writing or speaking. And the second is errors which are

caused by *lack of the knowledge of the rules of the language*. After all, this study focused only on the errors performed in the students' English compositions in writing a descriptive and paid no attention on the cause of them.

Surface Strategy Taxonomy in this research was used to show the way how surface structures were altered. Based on this taxonomy, Dulay *et al.* (1982:150), explain that there are four main categories of errors namely, omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. In this research, those categories above were used as guidance to define and locate the morphological errors in the students' paragraph writing.

In relation with the object of morphological errors analysis, Politzer and Ramirez (1973) in Language Two (1982:147) say that the errors are classified into errors in morphology, syntax and vocabulary. In this research error in morphology was used as the object of the research. After all, the objects of morphological errors in this research were only focused on the inflectional and derivational morpheme errors. They were as follows; 1) possessive inflection errors, 2) plural inflection errors, 3) third person singular verb inflection errors, 4) present participle inflection errors, 5) comparative inflection errors, 6) superlative inflection errors, and 7) derivational morpheme errors.

By considering the background above, the researcher was interested in conducting a research entitled "The Analysis of Morphological Errors Made by the VIII Grade Students in Writing a Descriptive Paragraph at SMPN 4 Jember in The 2013/2014". The problems of the research were formulated as follows:

1. What types of morphological errors were made by the VIII grade students of SMP 4 Jember in writing a descriptive paragraph?
2. What was the percentage of each type of morphological errors in writing a descriptive paragraph made by the VIII grade students of SMP 4 Jember?
3. Which type of morphological errors was mostly made by the second grade students of SMP 4 Jember in writing a descriptive paragraph?

Research Methods

In this research, the writer used a descriptive quantitative research, because this research was intended to know the types of morphological errors and the error percentage made by the VIII grade students in writing a descriptive paragraph. According to Mc Millan (1992:144), a descriptive quantitative describes phenomenon and usually in the form of statistics such as frequencies, percentages, averages, and sometimes variability. Therefore, the description and the calculation done in this

research were intended to find out the frequency of errors made by the students in writing a descriptive paragraph. The term of descriptive, in this research, was used only to describe the existing phenomena without changing some conditions that could affect the respondents' responses (McMillan, 1992:9).

The preliminary study was to get information about the tenses and kinds of text that had been taught to the eighth grade students, especially in the second semester. The area of this research was determined purposively. According to Arikunto (2006:117), a purposive method is a method based on the consideration of the characteristics of the population. This research was conducted at SMPN 4 Jember in the 2013/2014academic year.

The respondents in this research were the VIII grade students of SMPN 4 Jember in the 2013/2014 academic year. They were chosen by using proportional random sampling from the six classes. There were six classes of VIII grade students, in which each class consisted of 28 – 31 students. Based on the preliminary study, it was known that the number of the population is 178 students (six classes of the eight grade students). According to Arikunto (2006:134), if there are a large number of subjects, the sample can be taken 10%-15% or 20%-25%, in which each unit of population is given a number, and then samples can be collected randomly either by random numbers or by lottery. In this research, the respondents were taken 15% proportionally from the six classes. Thus, in this research, there were 30 students as the respondents of this research.

The main data were collected through writing test. It was used to collect the main data about the students' morphological errors in writing a descriptive paragraph. The writing test was given in 60 minutes. In writing test, the students were asked to write a short descriptive paragraph that consisted of at least 8 – 10 sentences (about 80 – 100 words) by choosing one of the seven topics given in the test sheet. Besides, interview and documentation were also conducted in this research to collect the supporting data.

The Steps of Data Analysis

The steps of data analysis were the ways to analyze the data obtained. There were some steps of error analysis in this research: (1) Collecting the error data, (2) Identifying the error data, (3) Tabulating the error data, (4) Classifying, and explaining the error data, and (5) Counting the error data. In this research, descriptive quantitative method was used to calculate the frequency and the percentage of the students' morphological errors in

their descriptive paragraph writing. The results of the counting were used to answer the research problems (a) what types of morphological errors were made, (b) what was the percentage of each type of morphological errors in writing a descriptive paragraph, and (c) which type of errors was made by most students in their writings. To find the percentage of the errors made by the students in writing a descriptive paragraph, the formula below was used.

$$E = n/N \times 100\%$$

Note:

E = The percentage of each category of morphological errors made by the students in their writings

n = The frequency of each category of morphological errors made by the students in their writings

N = The total number of morphological errors made by the students in their writings

(Adapted from Ali, 1993:182)

Research Result and Discussions

Based on the results of the writing test, the morphological errors made by the students in their writings were identified based on the types of morphological errors, namely, 1) possessive inflection errors, 2) plural inflection errors, 3) the third person singular verb inflection errors, 4) present participle inflection errors, 5) comparative inflection errors, 6) superlative inflection errors, and 7) derivational morpheme errors.

The results of the identification and the calculation of morphological errors were based on the category of surface strategy taxonomy above are presented in the following table.

No	Types of Morphological Errors	Surface Strategy Taxonomy Category			Total (n)
		Omission	Addition	Misformation	
1.	Possessive inflection errors	14	2	6	22
2.	Plural inflection errors	13	5	-	18
3.	The third person singular verb inflection errors	42	1	1	44
4.	Present participle inflection errors	2	12	2	16
5.	Comparative inflection errors	-	1	-	1
6.	Superlative inflection errors	1	-	-	1
7.	Derivational morpheme errors	-	4	4	8
Total (N)		**72**	**25**	**13**	**110**

From the table above, it was known that based on the surface strategy taxonomy, the students made the morphological errors in the form of omission errors, addition errors, and misformation errors as many as 110. There were 72 errors dealing with omission errors that consisted of 14 omission errors in the forms of possessive inflection errors, 13 omission errors in the form of plural inflection errors, 42 omission errors in the form of third person singular verb inflection errors, 2 omission errors in the form of present participle inflection errors, and 1 omission error in the form of superlative inflection error. However, there were 25 errors dealing with addition errors that consisted of 2 addition errors in the form of possessive inflection errors, 5 addition errors in the form of plural inflection errors, 1 addition error in the form of third person singular verb error, 12 addition errors in the form of present participle inflection errors, 1 addition errors in the form of comparative inflection error, and 4 addition errors in the form of derivational morpheme errors. Then, there were 13 errors dealing with misformation errors that consisted of 6 misformation errors in the form of possessive inflection errors, 1 misformation errors in the form of third person singular verb error, 2 misformation errors in the form of present participial inflection errors, and 4 misformation errors in the form of derivational morpheme errors. Most of the errors that the students made were omission errors as many as 72 errors.

Furthermore, based on the result of the tabulation of morphological errors made by the students in their descriptive paragraph writing, it was known that there were two students who made 10 errors as the highest number of morphological errors. There was no student who made more than 10 morphological errors. Based on the indicators of this research, there was 1 student who made no errors in their paragraph writing. However, there were 110 errors dealing with the use of inflectional and derivational morphemes in the students' writings. There were 22 possessive inflection errors, 18 plural inflection errors, 44 third person singular verb inflection errors, 16 present participle inflection errors, 1 comparative inflection error, 1 superlative inflection error and 8 derivational morpheme errors.

To make clearer, the results of classification and explanation of morphological errors made by the students in their descriptive paragraph writings can be seen in the table of the types and the frequency of morphological errors below.

Yusuf Wibisono *et al. The Analysis of Morphological Errors Made by the VIII Grade Students in Writing a Descriptive Paragraph at SMPN 4 Jember in the 2013/2014*

4

No.	Types of Morphological Errors	The Total Number of Errors	Percentage
1.	Possessive inflection errors	22	20.00%
2.	Plural inflection errors	18	16.36%
3.	The third person singular verb inflection errors	44	40.00%
4.	Present participle inflection errors	16	14.45%
5.	Comparative inflection errors	1	0.90%
6.	Superlative inflection errors	1	0.90%
7.	Derivational morpheme errors	8	7.27%
	Total	**110**	**100%**

From the table above, it was known that the students made all types of morphological inflection errors in writing a descriptive paragraph. There were 110 errors dealing with the use of morphological inflection. They were 22 possessive inflection errors, 18 plural inflection errors, 44 third person singular verb inflection errors, 16 present participle inflection errors, 1 comparative inflection error, 1 superlative inflection error and 8 derivational morpheme errors. From those types of morphological errors, the third person singular verb inflection error was the most error made by the students in writing a descriptive paragraph as many as 44 errors of the whole error. The percentage of each type of morphological errors in writing a descriptive paragraph made by the students is described in the following table.

From the table above, it was known that the highest percentage of the morphological errors made by the students in the descriptive paragraph writing was the percentage of the third person singular verb inflection errors as many as 40.00%, while the lowest percentage of morphological errors was the percentage of the comparative inflection errors and superlative inflection errors as many as 0.90%.

Based on the result of interview with the English teacher, it was known that tenses that had been taught to the VIII grade students, especially in the second semester, were simple present tense, present continuous tense and simple past tense. In addition, the teacher usually teaches writing integratedly with the reading skill. Dealing with the writing text, the students were taught descriptive and recount texts for the second semester of the eighth grade. The descriptive text was taught in the previous semester, so it was not taught deeply in the second semester.

The result of documentation in this research was used to get the supporting data about the names of the research respondents. They were taken by using proportional random sampling from the six classes of the eight grade students by lottery as many as 15% from each class.

Conclusion and Suggestions

Based on the result and the discussion above, it could be concluded that the students made some types of morphological errors in their descriptive paragraph writing such as possessive inflection errors as many as 22 errors, plural inflection errors as many as 8 errors, the third person singular verb inflection errors as many as 44 errors, present participle inflection errors as many as 16 errors, comparative inflection error as many as 1 error, superlative inflection error as many as 1 error, and derivational morpheme errors as many as 8 errors. However, the percentage of the morphological errors made by the students in their descriptive paragraph writing were; possessive inflection errors as many as 20.00%, plural inflection errors as many as 16.36%, the third person singular verb inflection errors as many as 40.00%, present participle inflection errors as many as 14.45%, comparative inflection error as many as 0.90%, superlative inflection error as many as 0.90%, and derivational morpheme errors as many as 7,27%. The most morphological error made by the students in their descriptive paragraph writing was the third person singular verb inflection errors that reached 44 errors or 40.00% of the whole errors.

These errors might happen since the teacher did not apply different teaching media or technique in teaching English to the students. Therefore, the teacher should give remedial teaching to the students who have not mastered the materials yet, especially the materials that deal with descriptive writing and morphological errors in order to minimize the students' morphological errors in their descriptive paragraph writing. Besides, the students should study structure harder, for example doing grammar exercises by using media or games, so that they can comprehend the grammar rules well and apply them in the sentences properly. They should also practice writing a lot to develop their writing skill without making a lot of grammatical errors, especially morphological errors. For the future researchers are suggested to conduct a further research dealing with a different research design, such as a classroom action research in order to improve the students' grammar mastery by giving feedback of morphological errors, or similar study with different language skills or components, such as speaking or pronunciation.

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