

AN ERROR ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' TEST RESULTS
(A Study at MAN 2 Makassar)



A THESIS

*Submitted to the Faculty of Cultural Sciences Hasanuddin University
As Partial Requirements to Obtain Bachelor Degree in
English Literature Study Program*

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**ENGLISH LITERATURE STUDY PROGRAM
FACULTY OF CULTURAL SCIENCES
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LEGITIMATION
THESIS
AN ERROR ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' TEST RESULTS
(A STUDY AT MAN 2 MAKASSAR)

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It has been examined before the Board of Thesis Examination on 25th August 2023 and is
declare to fulfilled the requirements.

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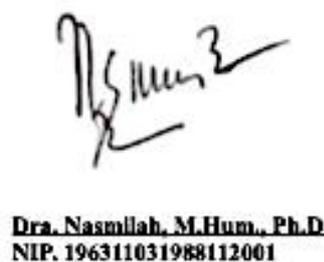
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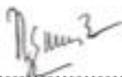
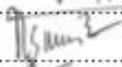
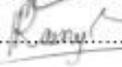
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On 9 January 2024, the Board of Thesis Examination has kindly approved a thesis by Athaya Laurine Ramdhani (F041181508) entitled **"An Error Analysis of Students' Test Results (A Study at MAN 2 Makassar)"** submitted in fulfillment of one of the requirements to obtain a Sarjana Degree in English Literature Study Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University.

Makassar, 9th January 2024

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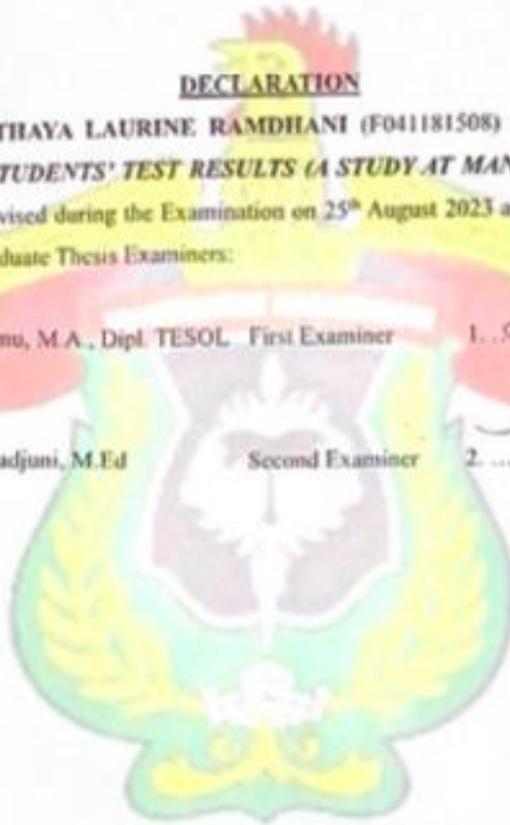
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Hereby, the writer declares that this thesis is written by herself. This thesis does not contain any materials that have been published by other people, and it does not cite other people's ideas except quotations and references.

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APPROVAL FORM

With reference to the letter of the Dean of Cultural Sciences Hasanuddin University No. 1625/UN49.1/KEP/2021 regarding supervision, we hereby confirm to approve of the thesis draft by Athaya Laurine Ramdhani (F041181508) to be examined at the English Department, Faculty of Cultural Sciences.

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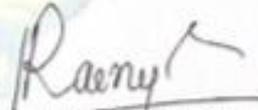
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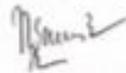


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ABSTRACT

AN ERROR ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' TEST RESULT (A STUDY AT MAN 2 MAKASSAR)

ATHAYA LAURINE RAMDHANI

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This research aimed to analyze grammatical errors in students' test results in multiple choices tests. This research was conducted using the descriptive analysis technique (percentage). The subject of this research was XI MIPA 4 grade of MAN 2 Makassar 2022/2023 academic year which consisted of 43 students. The objectives of this research were to describe the type and causes of errors in the simple present tense, present continuous tense, and simple past tense. This research was conducted in the score test method. The data was gathered through quantitative data.

The result of this research showed that there are many errors made by the students in using the simple present tense, present continuous tense, and simple past tense. For the simple present tense, the average total error percentage is 93,4%. For the present continuous tense, the average total error percentage is 20%. For the simple past tense, the average total error percentage is 33,3%. There are several causes of the errors, such as some of the students not paying attention when the teacher was giving the lesson, and there were not any specific lessons only for grammar in their school.

Keyword: Grammatical Errors, Multiple Choice Test.

ABSTRAK

ANALISIS KESALAHAN HASIL TES SISWA (STUDI DI MAN 2 MAKASSAR)

ATHAYA LAURINE RAMDHANI

F041181508

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis kesalahan tata bahasa pada hasil tes siswa dalam tes pilihan ganda. Penelitian ini dilakukan dengan menggunakan teknik analisis deskriptif (persentase). Subyek penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas XI MIPA 4 MAN 2 Makassar tahun ajaran 2022/2023 yang berjumlah 43 siswa. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mendeskripsikan jenis dan penyebab kesalahan dalam simple present tense, present continuous tense, dan simple past tense. Penelitian ini dilakukan dengan metode tes skor. Data dikumpulkan melalui data kuantitatif.

Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa masih banyak kesalahan yang dilakukan siswa dalam menggunakan simple present tense, present continuous tense, dan simple past tense. Untuk simple present tense, persentase kesalahan total rata-rata adalah 93,4%. Untuk present continuous tense, persentase kesalahan total rata-rata adalah 20%. Untuk simple past tense, persentase kesalahan total rata-rata adalah 33,3%. Ada beberapa penyebab terjadinya kesalahan, seperti beberapa siswa tidak memperhatikan saat guru memberikan pelajaran, dan tidak ada pelajaran khusus tata bahasa di sekolah mereka.

Kata Kunci: Kesalahan Tata Bahasa, Tes Pilihan Ganda.

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Assalamu 'alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.

Alhamdulillah, Praise, and Gratitude the author goes to Allah Subhanahu Wata'ala, the One who only asks for help, for all the pleasures given. Because of the prayers and endeavors throughout this process, the author was finally able to complete his thesis entitled "An Error Analysis of Students' Test Results (A Study at MAN 2 Makassar)". Shalawat and greetings to Rasulullah Shalallahu Alaihi Wasallam who is always the best source of inspiration and role model for mankind.

This thesis is made to fulfill the final assignment of lectures and as one of the requirements to obtain a bachelor's degree and as a form of implementation of the knowledge gained during lectures at the English Literature Study Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University. The author realizes that the thesis is still far from being perfect. Therefore, the author hopes to learn more in implementing the knowledge gained.

In preparing this thesis, the author faced various problems with herself, various demands and activities that had to be carried out, and the COVID-19 pandemic which had hampered and limited the course of this thesis research that occurred in the past. However, there are always figures who provide support and encouragement that make the author not want to give up. The figures are the author's beloved parents, **Mr. Muhammad Yauri Kasman** and **Mrs. Elvira Wahyuni**, thank you for all the sincere sacrifices for the author.

The thesis certainly cannot be separated from the guidance, input, and directions from various parties from the university. Therefore, on this occasion, the author would like to express her deepest gratitude to:

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2. Dean of the Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University, **Prof. Dr. Akin Duli, M.A.**, and his staff.
3. Head of the English Department, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University, **Dra. Nasmilah, M.Hum., Ph.D.**
4. **Abbas, S.S., M.Hum.** as the author's academic supervisor.
5. The two supervisors of the author's thesis, **Dra. Nasmilah, M.Hum., Ph.D.** as the first supervisor, and **Sitti Sahraeny, S.S., M.AppLing.** as the second supervisor as well as the secretary of the English Department, for their guidance and support to the author in writing this thesis.
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Makassar, 22 August 2023

The Author

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

Language is the principal tool that people depend on in regular lifestyles to communicate. Basically, language is included in human lifestyles. There are many languages all around the world, and one of them is English.

English became an important language in the globalization era. As generally known, being an international language, this language takes the most important role in all aspects of our life, such as politics, economy, entertainment, and academic life. Because of that, English becomes delivering language that is needed in many disciplines. So, it is important to learn the English Language.

In the process of learning English, the teaching methods of the teacher have a very important role. The methods certainly should make students enjoy the subject, and also increase the pupil motivation for learning. Furthermore, a good teacher needs to prepare a well-planned lesson, so the students do not get bored in class. If the methods make them bored, the teacher should change them and learn why they fail. On the other hand, then when the teacher has an excellent method, sometimes does not get successful in making students absorb or adapt to the lesson. It is probably caused by students' problems and less preparation for learning. In

this case, it depends on the teaching methods that the teacher has, the relationship with the students in or out of the classroom, and also the students' preparation for learning.

Indonesian students have a different level of English proficiency although English has been taught from elementary school until university. The abilities of students might be related to the teacher's ability to make the students understand what they teach. Therefore, one of the most important things in supporting students to get knowledge is teachers' strategies and methods.

In the context of teaching and learning English, teaching grammar has an immense effect in assisting students to get the target of learning English based on communication. Students could be confused to speak or write English without knowledge, especially structure or grammar. So, one of the language components that must be known by English learners is grammar. By mastering grammar, the students will be able to develop their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. It tried to make the student learn a foreign/second language in the same way when they learned the first language.

Grammar is a set of rules that must be learned, therefore learning the English language is more difficult than we originally thought. Every language learner is given instruction in grammar as one of the components of the English Language. It is crucial for understanding the English language. Without a good knowledge of grammar, students will struggle to

create meaningful sentences and effectively communicate their thoughts in communication exercises. But if they can use the language correctly and clearly, they will feel more comfortable speaking and writing in English if they have good grammar.

When we want to communicate with people from other groups who have different languages, we have to try to understand the language used by these people. Knowing something about students' dialects or native languages helps define students' learning challenges. We often find misunderstandings in two conversation groups that have different languages. This could be caused by the differences in their native languages. The differences between the two languages lie in their grammatical system, sound system, vocabulary, and culture. This also happens to Indonesian students who are learning English. They especially have difficulties with the grammatical system.

Making faults and mistakes is usual and unavoidable when learning English tenses, even though there are many of them. This problem is as John Norrish notes "it is natural for the students as a human being to make an error, even many native speakers produce many mistakes in speaking and they would be unaware of the way they speak unless they heard the recording of themselves."

B. Research Question

From the previous explanation, there are some questions that are going to be answered by the writer by doing research:

1. What were the errors made by the students in using the simple present tense, present continuous tense, and simple past tense?
2. What causes the students to make errors in using the simple present tense, present continuous tense, and simple past tense?

C. Objective of Writing

As shown in the background of the writing, students still often make errors in using English. Therefore, some objectives can be presented in this writing. They are:

1. To describe the errors of the simple present tense, present continuous tense, and simple past tense made by students.
2. To describe the causes of errors in the simple present tense, present continuous tense, and simple past tense.

D. Significance of Research

In writing this thesis, the writer was expected to get significance not only theoretically but also practically.

This study will show teachers how frequently students use the simple present tense, present continuous tense, and simple past tense incorrectly. It will help teachers understand how to correct tense mistakes, especially when using the simple present tense, present continuous tense, and simple past tense. In practice, it will offer feedback that they can apply to improve their teaching methods.

It can be used to educate students to be more cautious while using the simple present tense, present continuous tense, and simple past tense as well as an input to help students improve their knowledge of English.

The basic data from this study can be used by future researchers who are interested in analyzing the English tenses to do additional research.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Previous Study

Observation with the purpose to have an actual need for applicable studies. Relevant studies serve to offer evidence of the studies and evaluations formerly used. After analyzing a few previous studies, the writer finds out a number of them have written approximately the writing. Such as:

Meilani Anryani Kadir (2012). The title of her writing is Grammatical Error in English Written Text by Students of the English Department Hasanuddin University. She tried to focus on the error in written text in some essays.

Hestiyani Diyai (2008). The focus of her writing is on the grammatical errors in students' essays.

Ridwan (2007). He analyzed some grammatical errors made in writing by students of the English Department. Besides that, he also tried to find out why do the students keep making an error especially in arranging the sentences.

B. Review of Related Theory

1. Definition of Error

The process of learning a second language is different from studying a first language in that mistakes are a natural part of the learning process.

Learners will immediately relate to new vocabulary, new grammatical structures, and foreign pronunciations that are different from those in their own tongues in this new language system. Despite their best efforts, it is unavoidable that individuals will make a lot of mistakes when they try to speak or write the target language.

It is commonly known that learner who learns a foreign language as their second language often makes an error in their language. An error can happen anytime when the learner does not follow the rules of the language. Sometimes, they cannot avoid it even though they have learned and know the correct rules.

Kiparsky (1972) makes a distinction in error that relates it to comprehensibility. They said that two fundamental types of error are global and local error. Global error is the type that facts the interpretation of the whole sentence. This error causes a misunderstanding or a failure in getting a message. This error aims to measure the students' ability to arrange sentences in logical errors and to comprehend the message in the context by using connectors. Local error is merely a part of it, a clause or a phrase. This kind of error can cause trouble in particular constituents or clauses in sentences. It does not significantly hinder the comprehension of the sentences.

Concluding the terms above, we can say that errors will occur if there are incorrect rules used by the learners. It can arise if the language learners cannot produce the correct form of the language that they used.

This can happen to everyone who has learned the form of the language, in the process of learning, and even to the native speaker if they are in an unsuitable situation when they are producing the language.

It can be in the form of pronunciation, syntactical errors, or semantic errors. In addition, these errors can be regarded as a failure or as positive aids to learning.

It is undeniable that students make mistakes and commit errors in their writing products. However, all of those can be inhibited by realizing the errors and operating on them according to the feedback given. The steps that students follow get the writer to realize that if the mistakes and errors of language in constructing a new language system are analyzed carefully, the process of writing shall be understood.

According to the definition of errors given by some experts, an error is a mistake that students make during learning. It was brought on by inappropriate language usage as a result of incomplete information and skill gained via language study.

2. Definition of Error Analysis

Making mistakes or errors is a part of the process of using a second language. The student will immediately connect with new vocabulary, new grammatical structures, and foreign pronunciations in the new language system that are different from the learner's native tongue.

The practice of analyzing one's error is known as error analysis. It was a student mistake in this case. The process of analysis is connected

to effective teaching and learning. There are some experts who purpose different concepts of error analysis. S.K Sharma (1982) stated, “error analysis is a process based on analysis of learner’s error with one clear objective: involving a suitable and effective teaching-learning strategy and remedial measure necessary in certain clearly marked out areas of the foreign.”

Nunan (2005: 31) defines that error analysis involves studying samples of students’ written language to identify grammatical errors they make. This analysis is needed to be the basis for providing feedback to the students, or for tabulating the errors. Although, these analyses are extremely time-consuming and also probably not feasible in large classes. It helps a basis to decide on the focus of review lessons.

Practically, error analysis can be a very useful device for a foreign language teaching program. Errors provide feedback; they tell the lecturers something about the effectiveness of their teaching materials and their teaching techniques.

For teachers, error analysis is a useful source of knowledge. It gives teachers information about students’ mistakes so they can fix them and improve the effectiveness of their instruction. To put it another way, mistakes indicate to teachers and researchers if a method is successful or not.

3. Differences between Error and Mistake

The error generally is the student's fault in case of understanding. The fault explained here describes the student as not understanding the language rules yet. While a mistake is the student's fault based on a wrong assumption or failure to use the specific system which has already been known. This indicated that the student has already understood some rules in using English. Because of the slip of the tongue, disordering grammar, a fault to remember, or any other physical factors such as exhaustion or emotional.

Another hand, an error is unintentionally deviant and is not self-correctible by its author. Then, errors are the result of the failure of performance. Besides, errors cannot be self-corrected until the relevant input has been provided and converted into intake by the learners. In other words, errors require further relevant learning to take place before they can be self-corrected.

Students themselves make mistakes when studying a foreign language. Linguists distinguish between error and mistake while studying error analysis. Mistakes are different from errors. Because the students do not know what the correct response is, an error is a wrong response. Although the students' response was incorrect, if they had given it some thought, they would have known what the correct response was. This means that students have the capacity to fix a mistake if given

another chance, however, students do not have the potential to fix a mistake until they understand what the right answer is.

The differences between them can be defined as H.D Brown stating “errors are a result of partial knowledge because the teaching-learning process extends over time. A mistake is a performance of error that is either the random guess or slip, in that it is a failure to utilize a known system correctly.”

As stated above, mistakes happened not as a result of the extended process of teaching-learning brought on by unbalanced knowledge, but rather as a result of verbal mistakes.

Additionally, Edge in Harmer proposed that we can categorize errors into two general groups: ‘slips’ and ‘attempts’. While attempts are errors made when students try to express something but do not yet know how to say it correctly, slips are errors that students can self-correct and do not require explanation.

The statement above means that both ‘slips’ and ‘attempts’ are mistakes, the difference is ‘slips’ can be corrected by the students, but in ‘attempts’ the students do not know yet how to say something when they want to say it.

Moreover, an error cannot be self-corrected. According to James (1998: 30), even errors may be self-corrected if the deviation is mentioned to the speaker. Then, error exhibits a part of the learners’ competence in the target language.

Meanwhile, a mistake refers to an overall performance error this is both a random guess. The maximum crucial aspect to observe here in case of error and mistake itself is the fault due to specific conditions. A mistake occurred due to 'Error in Performance' even as an Error due to 'Error in Competence'.

To distinguish, we simply must recheck the students' tasks. If they are able to distinguish and accurately the fault they made, this suggests that the fault made is an 'Error in Performance' which means a Mistake. While the students could not distinguish and accurately the fault, it approach that the fault is 'Error in Competence' which means that Error. The difference between an error and a mistake is that where a mistake may be fixed by the individual, an error cannot.

4. The Causes and Sources of Error

It is common for students to make mistakes during the learning process. It has a variety of causes. Norrish divides the three categories of error sources into carelessness, interference from the first language, and translation.

a. Carelessness

It frequently has a tight connection to a lack of motivation. Many teachers would acknowledge that it is not necessarily the student's fault if he loses interest; perhaps the subject matter and/or presentational manner are not right for them.

b. First Language

According to Norrish, habit development involves acquiring a language, whether it be one's mother tongue or a foreign language. When someone tries to develop new habits, the existing ones will get in the way. First language interference is the term for this error-causing factor.

c. Translation

It is a common source of error. This occurs as a result of a student's word-by-word translation of a sentence or an idiomatic expression from their native tongue into the target language. This is probably the most typical reason for inaccuracy.

Another expert who discusses the sources of error is Brown. He stated that there are four main sources of error. He gives the terms 'communication strategies', 'context learning', 'interlingual transfer', and 'intralingual transfer'.

The interlingual transfer is the negative effect of the learner's mother tongue. For all learners, this is a substantial source of error. When learning a second language, people are more susceptible to interference or interlanguage transfer from their native tongue.

The negative influence of the target language is known as an intralingual transfer. According to Carl James, who discusses intralingual errors separately from the L1 transfer, learners who are unfamiliar with a TL form at any level and in any class have two options: either they can begin learning the necessary itemizing by

putting their learning strategies to use, or they can attempt to fill the gap by turning to communication strategies.

The third major source of error is the learning context. In the case of education learning, context refers to the classroom with the teacher and its resources, whereas in the case of untutored second language learning, context refers to the social situation. In a classroom setting, the teacher or the textbook may influence the student to form inaccurate statements about the language.

Learning styles were discussed in relation to communication strategies. Clearly, learners use production techniques to improve the quality of their messages. However, sometimes these methods themselves can turn into a cause of the error.

The writer decided to use the causes of error according to Brown to find the student's errors in using English tenses (simple present tense, present continuous tense, and simple past tense).

5. Types of Error

Using the opinions of some experts, the writer described many types of errors. Several categories can be used to categorize errors. Heidi Dulay (1982) observed that there were four main types of errors covered by the descriptive classification of errors. They are communicative effect, comparative analysis, surface strategy, and linguistic category.

a. Error types based on communicative effect taxonomy

The communicative effect analyzes errors in terms of how they affect the reader or listener. It focuses on separating mistakes that appear to lead to miscommunication from those that don't. These errors are divided into two parts;

1) Global error

These errors with sentence structure as a whole seriously affect. It is a result of the wide syntactic range of such errors. The most systematic global errors include:

- Wrong order of major constituents, for example, *English language use many people*
- Missing, wrong, or misplaced sentence connectors, for example, *(if) not take this bus, we late for school*
- Missing cues to signal obligatory exceptions to pervasive syntactic rules, for example, *the student's proposal (was) looked into (by) the principal*
- Regularization of pervasive syntactic rules to exceptions, for example, *we amused that movie very much it should be that movie amused us very much*

2) Local errors

Local errors can be seen in the formation of quantifiers, articles, auxiliaries, and noun and verb inflections. Local errors differ from global errors in that they often do not significantly affect communication. For example, *why we like each other?*

b. Error types based on comparative taxonomy

Comparative taxonomy categorizes errors by comparing the structure of errors made by language learners with certain other forms of construction. This classification is divided into four parts:

- 1) Developmental errors, these errors are like the errors made by students learning the target language as their first language. For example, *dog eat it*
- 2) Interlingual errors, this error is like in structure to a semantically equivalent phrase or sentence in the learner's native language. For example, *I visit temple Prambanan*
This is an error in using the phrase, in which the learner translates the Indonesian language word for word into the English language.
- 3) Ambiguous errors, this error reflect the learner's native language structure, and at the same time, they are of the type found in the speech of children acquiring a first language. This error is equally well as developmental or interlingual. For example, *I no have a car*
- 4) Other errors, this error is beside the other types above such as developmental errors, interlingual errors, and ambiguous errors. For example, *she do hungry*

c. Error types based on surface strategy taxonomy

In this type, learners may add unnecessary things or delete necessary ones; they may also misform or rearrange objects.

There are four subtypes error based on surface strategy taxonomy:

1. *Omission*, this error are categorized by the omitting an item should be appeared in a well-formed utterance. Although any morpheme or word in a sentence is a potential candidate for omission, some types of morphemes are omitted more than others.

For example: *I saw two bird on the tree*

The learners omit the -s to describe a noun in plural.

2. *Addition*, this error is the opposite of omissions. These errors are categorized by the presence of an item which must not appear in a well-formed utterance.

It is divided into three types of addition errors;

- a. *Double marking*, this addition error is described as the failure to delete certain items which are required in some linguistic constructions, but not in others. The learners who have acquired the tensed form for both auxiliary and verb

For example: *we didn't went there*

It's because two items rather than one are marked for the same feature (tense in the example above).

- b. Regularization, a rule typically added to a linguistic item is erroneously added to exceptional items of the given class that do not take a marker.
- c. Simple addition, if an addition error is not a double marking or regularization, it is called simple addition. No particular features characterize simple addition other than those that characterize all addition errors.

For example: *the fishes doesn't live in the water*

The linguistic item added is the third person singular -s.

- 3. *Misformation*, these errors are characterized by the use of the wrong form of the morpheme or structure. In misformation errors the learner supplies something, although it is incorrect.

For example: *the dog eated the chicken*

The learner supplies a past tense marker, but it was not the right one.

- a. Regularization errors, the misformation category are those in which a regular marker is used in place of an irregular one, as in *runned* for *ran* or *gooses* for *geese*.
- b. Archi-forms, the selection of one a class of forms to represent others in the class is a common characteristic of all stages of second language acquisition.

c. Alternating forms, as a learner's vocabulary and grammar grow, the use of archi-forms often gives way to apparently fairly free alternation of various members of a class with each other.

4. *Misordering*, as the label suggests, misordering errors are characterized by the incorrect placement of a morpheme or group of morphemes in an utterance.

For example:

- He is all the time late

The correct sentence is:

- He is late all the time

d. Error types based on linguistic category

The type of error classifies the errors by combining the language components including phonology (pronunciation), syntax, morphology (grammar), semantics, lexicon (meaning and vocabulary), and discourse (style) with particular linguistic constituent the error affects include the elements that comprise each language component.

For example: "*me forget it*"

The learner attempted to use me as a subject. It is included in a syntax error in the use of pronouns.

Although the student made an error in this type, the reader can get the meaning or understand what the sentence means.

The writer decided to use the types of errors according to Dulay to find the students' errors in using English tenses (simple present tense, present continuous tense, and simple past tense).

6. Grammar

a. Definition

Each language has its own grammar. It is important since it is necessary to improve language learning. No language can exist without grammar, and no one can use a language fluently without understanding it. Grammar allows for the development and comprehension of an effectively unlimited number of words. Grammar is important for connecting speaker and listener in spoken and verbal sharing information.

Different experts define the term grammar differently. According to Ba'dulu (1997:7), Grammar is the arrangement of a verb phrase or a language form that describes a time relationship. Cook and Sutter (1980:47) say that the form that a verb has to describe things is known as the tense. Lado (1977:141) defines grammar as usually taught in terms of rules that instruct students about what to say and what not to say in learning how to speak the language of the socially educated class. Gerot and Wignell (1994:2) say that grammar is a philosophy of a language, describing how it is created and operates. According to

Harmer (2001:12), grammar describes the various ways that words can take on different forms and be combined to make sentences.

Chomsky's (1965) transformational generative grammar and its earlier, more general formulation, universal grammar, are among the most well-known examples of syntactocentric theory. Transformational generative grammar wanted to provide a "universal" account of language behavior that revealed the internal linguistic system to which all humans are predisposed, in contrast to traditional or structural grammar that tries to describe a single language. According to transformational-generative grammar, a detailed investigation at the sentence level can reveal the underlying characteristics of any given language system.

In this context, Chomsky put up a set of rules for phrase construction that characterize the fundamental linguistic structures. These principles for phrase construction combine with lexical ones to provide a semantic illustration of the rules. The basic structure is then subjected to a number of "transformation" rules in order to add, remove, shift, or replace the sentence's fundamental parts. Then, phonological or orthographic rules are used, followed by morphological rules.

In accordance with Chomsky's (1981) theory of universal grammar, understanding a language involves not only being aware of the universal principles that all languages share but also being aware of the parameters by which grammatical variation is observed among

languages or between different dialects of the same language. Exposure to the target language sets off these parameters. To describe a descriptively appropriate picture of linguistic events, Chomsky (1995) has stated that “grammars should be described in terms of the minimal set of theoretical and descriptive apparatus necessary”. To reduce the acquisitional cost for children acquiring a language in a relatively short amount of time, the linguistic theory has adopted a minimalist approach.

According to Chomsky (1981b:7), universal grammar “is taken to be a characterization of the child’s pre-linguistic initial state”. It consists of “a system of principles with parameters to be fixed, along with periphery of marked exceptions” (Chomsky, 1986a:150-151).

A combination of universal rules that apply to all languages and a set of guidelines that may differ from language to language makeup what is known as “core grammar”. The “peripheral grammar”, in contrast, consists of linguistic variations and irregularities. The theory of UG must observe two conditions: “on the one hand, it must be compatible with the diversity of existing (indeed possible) grammars. At the same time, universal grammar must be sufficiently constrained and restrictive in the options it permits so as to account for the fact that each of these grammars develops in the mind on the basis of quite limited evidence ... (i.e. the logical problem). What we expect to find, then, is a highly structured theory of UG based on a number of fundamental principles that sharply restrict the class of attainable

grammars and narrowly constrain their form, but with parameters that have to be fixed by experience”.

On the role of parameters in syntactic theory Wexler and Manzini (1987) remark “parameters have been introduced into linguistic theory as a solution to the fundamental problem linguistics: the tension between the existing variety of natural language and the necessity of explaining how children can actually learn the grammars of their particular languages”.

The group of rules is not made larger by the existence of the parameters because they are a part of a “higher” principle (modularity of the model). In this way, the use of parameters makes it possible to describe and explain linguistic processes that would otherwise need the application of several redundant rules. In addition, the use of parameters accounts for and restricts the amount of linguistic variance between languages.

The explanation of linguistic phenomena is not the outcome of one single principle but rather the result of the interaction of several principles and parameters. A recent development in syntactic theory which underlies universal grammar is ‘Government-Binding’ (henceforth GB) originates from two primary aspects of the overall theory: “bounding theory poses locality conditions on certain processes and related items.

The central notion of government theory is the relation between the head of construction and the categories dependent on it. The theory is concerned with the assignment of thematic roles such as agent-of-action, etc. [...] Binding theory is concerned with relations of anaphors, pronouns, names, and variables to possible antecedents. Case theory deals with the assignment of an abstract case and its morphological realization.

Control theory determines the potential for reference of the abstract pronominal element PRO” (Chomsky, 1981b:6). Each ‘module’ of the theory is a part of the general theory. For example, the case theory and the theory of government both deal with how cases are assigned. The binding theory and the theory of grammar both account for the sentence’s referential possibilities. The parameters used to describe the range of variance between languages can be fixed to either the negative or positive value of each language.

The issue of learnability is intimately related to universal grammar theory. Some of the important linguistic principles and parameters will be discussed in order to get a sense of what universal grammar might contain and how it relates to language learning.

Chomsky (1975:30-31) illustrates the functioning of structure dependence in the adult language with the following example: the man is tall-is the man tall?, the book is on the table-is the book on the table? The interrogative form of declarative is obtained by moving the first

verbal element to the front position. Apparently, this type of movement relies on the linear order of words. However, linear order is not sufficient to describe appropriately the operation involved, as in the following example (Chomsky, ib): the man who is tall is in the room-* is the man who tall is in the room?, the movement of the first verbal element to front position yields a wildly ungrammatical sentence.

The right result, in this case, is obtained by moving into the first position of the second verb of the sentence. Crucially, Chomsky's definition of structure-dependence predicts that this type of linear movement (i.e. based on the sequence of items) is not allowed since it would move a single element rather than a category, building the appropriate construction of the yes/no question in English requires the innate knowledge by native speakers of syntactic category: in this case, only the auxiliary element that follows a subject noun phrase can move to the front position.

The validity of the principle also applies to language acquisition. Early hypotheses about possible grammatical components are "defined on sentences of words analyzed into abstract phrases" (Chomsky, 1975:32). During the course of language acquisition, children do not produce sentences violating the principle of structure-dependence (see Lightfoot, 1991:4).

Finally, Chomsky's linguistic program has evolved considerably over the years. The details of this system are complex and beyond the

purview of this book. For our purposes, I will refer to this work simply as universal grammar. Although universal grammar has deepened our understanding of syntax, it has been criticized for failing to account for meaning or language use in social contexts (Hymes, 1971; Halliday, 1994).

In other words, universal grammar focus on syntax downplayed to some extent the role of semantics, or the study of the conventional meanings of words, phrases, and sentences, and excluded pragmatics, or meanings derived from context-specific use.

Knowing that grammar makes it simple to understand why it is necessary and important. Someone cannot say that one mastered a language if they are not fluent in its grammar. In addition, since grammar explains how to apply a language, it seems impossible to understand a language without studying it. People try to communicate their ideas to others by learning how to put together an effective message using the rules they already know. Grammar describes these guidelines.

In conclusion, grammar is the study of word classes, their inflections, and their roles and relationships in a sentence.

b. Tenses

The Latin word “Tempus”, which means “time”, is where the word “tense” eventually comes from. A verb form used to express time is called tense. Tenses are used as a method to indicate time. According to Dharma (2007:100), tense is the use of adverbial in English in a proper

way. In discussing tense and time A.S Hornby states that “the words ‘time’ and ‘tense’ must not be confused. The word time stands for a concept with which all mankind is familiar, divided into past, present, and future. The word tense stands for a verb form or series of verb forms used to express a time relation. Tenses may indicate whether an action, activity, or state”. However, it should be pointed out that time in relation to the action is a concept that exists in the mind of the speaker, reader, or listener. Salaberry and Shirai (2002, p.2) have also offered a more detailed definition of tense as a deictic category that places a situation in time with respect to some other time, usually the moment of speech.

The word tense stands for a verb form or series of verb forms used to express a time relation. Tenses may indicate whether an action, activity, or state. Grammar tense must be carefully differentiated from actual time, for the two are not always identical in some contexts, however, the meaning may be relative to a point in the past or future, which is established in discourse (the moment being spoken about). Therefore, the researcher concludes that tenses are the changing of verb form to describe the time of an event.

The use of grammar in English sentences is important. In English, tense is included in every sentence. Tense is a verb-based technique that is used to show the timing of an action or event in relation to the time of speaking, as well as sometimes its continuation or conclusion.

Commonly, the term “tense” refers to the period of time that is related to the situation at the time of utterance or when speaking. A situation described in the present tense is related as occurring simultaneously with the moment of speaking (John is singing); a situation described in the past is related prior to the moment of speaking (John was singing), and a situation described in the future is related as occurring after the moment of speaking (John will singing).

Tense can be referred to as “deictic” since it refers to the time of the scenario that is related to the situation of the utterances. Deictic, then, refers to the period or timeframe that includes the instant of speech. Some terms that can describe it include yesterday, today, and tomorrow. There are only two simple tenses for English verbs: simple present (she writes) and simple past (she wrote).

English verbs can be in both simple and complex tenses. The present tense, which is a lexical verb and is identical to the last (apart from the -s ending in the third person singular), and the past tense, which is a typical lexical verb that has the -ed inflection, are the main tenses in English, according to the Oxford Dictionary of English Grammar. According to the form, there are two tenses: the present and the past.

There are many compound tenses in English. Compound tenses, according to Hornby, are created by combining two or more verb forms, and their combinations may be time-related. It is obvious that there are numerous different two-tenses and compound tenses (the present tense

and the past tense). According to Frank, there are three past tenses, and two future tenses, and the past perfect, present perfect, and future perfect tenses are all connected to the appropriate past, present, and future tenses, respectively. It demonstrates the diversity of time-based tenses.

The English tense that would be discussed are simple present, present continuous, and simple past.

- Simple Present Tense

By using the verb's simple form, the Simple Present Tense is created. The simple form of the verb changes and the an-s ending is added when a third-person singular subject (such as he, she, it, the man, etc.) is present. There are two main purposes for the simple present tense. The first, limited to a specific kind of verb, explains repetitive actions, while the second, describes present status. In the Pheonix Advanced Dictionary New Edition (2013) described in the affirmative verbal pattern if the subject is the third singular person (he, she, it) the verb infinitive will get changed.

- Generally, infinitive was added 's'

Table 1.1 infinitive added by 's'

| | |
|----------|--------|
| To come | Comes |
| To cut | Cuts |
| To speak | Speaks |
| To visit | Visits |

- Infinitive that were ended by 'ch''sh''s'and 'x' added 'es'

Table 1.2 Infinitive ended by 'ch''sh''s'and 'x' added 'es'

| | |
|----------|---------|
| To mix | Mixes |
| To teach | Teaches |
| To wash | Washes |
| To watch | Watches |

- Infinitive that were ended by 'o' must be added 'es'

Table 1.3 Infinitive ended by 'o' added 'es'

| | |
|------------|-----------|
| To do | Does |
| To go | Goes |
| To undo | Undoes |
| To undergo | Undergoes |

- Infinitive that were ended by vocal 'e' although the voice like 'z' and 'j', must be added 's'

Table 1.4 Infinitive vocal 'e' added 's'

| | |
|-----------|---------|
| To advise | Advises |
| To close | Closes |
| To leave | Leaves |
| To use | Uses |

- Infinitive that were ended by 'y' and preceded by a consonant, so 'y' changed to be 'i' and added 'es'

Table 1.5 Infinitive ended 'y' preceded by a consonant changed 'i' and added 'es'

| | |
|------------|-----------|
| To cry | Cries |
| To dulcify | Dulcifies |
| To fly | Flies |
| To reply | Replies |
| To study | Studies |

- Infinitives that were ended by 'y' and precede by a vocal, just added 's'

Table 1.6 Infinitive ended by 'y' preceded a vocal added by 's'

| | |
|---------|-------|
| To buy | Buys |
| To say | Says |
| To play | Plays |
| To pay | Pays |

A current action that is not complete is indicated by the simple present tense. This could be a general truth or a habitual behavior (something repeated, like brushing your teeth every day). The present tense can relate to an activity or event that is currently taking place or that is currently in progress. According to Akhlis and

Sosiowati (2000:2), the simple present tense describes an action that takes place in the present, in a direct way, or an activity that is repeated frequently or in a habitual manner, or an action that has no reference to time.

Pattern:

- a) Positive: S + V1 (-s/-es) + O + C
- b) Negative: S + do/does+not + V1 + O + C
- c) Interrogative: do/does + S + V1 + O + C

- Simple Past Tense

Using the verb's past tense creates the simple past tense. The past tense of a regular verb is created by adding the simple form (for example, want+ed=wanted). Their part forms are more or less specific for irregular verbs (went, bought, sold, wrote). The simple past tense is used to express things that have already happened or are finished.

According to Uchiyama (2006, p.56) the simple past tense means that the action ended in the past. Simple past can be used for most past actions, we can use it for actions that happened quickly, action that happened over time, or actions that were habits in the past.

According to Cowan (2008, p.359), the simple past tense is used for activities or situations that began and ended in the past and has nothing to do in the present.

There are two kinds of verbs used in simple past tense namely regular verbs and irregular verbs. Using regular verbs is easier than using irregular verbs because the difference is only at the end of the words that are added by *-ed*. Meanwhile, irregular verbs are more complicated.

Hughes (1998, p.29-31) states “Irregular verbs are the bane of students whose mother tongue is not English and who are trying to understand how these verbs are applied in various tenses. They even trip up native English speakers who are not always sure of the form of these verbs. It is not made any easier by the fact that some verbs are regular in American English and irregular in British English”.

However, there are some general classifications that make it a little easier to remember how their verbs are formed and to remember them when applying them to sentences.

Hughes (1998) also mentions that irregular verbs fall into three categories:

1. GROUP 1: verbs where all three forms are the same – e.g. ‘hit, hit, hit’
2. GROUP 2: verbs where two of the three forms are the same – e.g. ‘become, became, become’
3. GROUP 3: verbs where all three forms are different – e.g. ‘choose, chose, chosen’

Further, Hughes (1998, p.29-31) gives examples of irregular verbs from each group can be seen in the table below.

Table 1.7 Example of irregular verbs

| Base | Past | Past Participle | Group |
|-------------|-------------|------------------------|--------------|
| cut | cut | cut | 1 |
| hit | hit | hit | 1 |
| let | let | let | 1 |
| quit | quit | quit | 1 |
| bid | bid | bid | 1 |
| feed | fed | fed | 2 |
| feel | felt | felt | 2 |
| come | came | come | 2 |
| buy | bought | bought | 2 |
| arise | arose | arisen | 3 |
| begin | begun | began | 3 |
| bite | bit | bitten | 3 |
| break | broke | broken | 3 |

Pattern:

- a) Positive: S + V2 + O + C
- b) Negative: S + did + not + V1 + O + C
- c) Interrogative: Did + S + V1 + O + C

- Present Continuous Tense

When a verb is in the present continuous tense, it means that something is happening right now, regularly, and might continue in the future. The present continuous tense can be used to describe any action or situation that is occurring now, frequently, and possibly forever. It gives the text more character and action, and its result helps readers recognize when the action is taking place.

Present continuous tense is also called present progressive tense. According to Hornby (1975), the present progressive is the tense that is most frequently used for this purpose. It is the tense that is more closely related to the present. The adverb “now” or “today” may be used to describe the present time, but it is not necessary.

In addition to expressing general activity and activity happening at the time of speaking, the present continuous tense also expresses future time. When the sentence’s idea refers to a planned event or clear agenda, the present continuous might be employed to express future time. For example, Rizky is meeting with Dr. Smith next Wednesday.

According to Swan (1980) in his book *Practical English Usage* which explains some function of present continuous, namely:

- a) Present progressive tense is made with am/is/are. The commonest use of present progressive tense is to talk about

actions and situations that are already going on at the moment of speaking.

Example: What is going on? Is there something wrong?

- b) Present progressive tense is often used to talk about developing or changing situations.

Example: The rain is heavy and heavy

- c) Sometimes, the present progressive is used in a more general way to talk about something that may be going on at any time.

Example: You call me while I am making a cake

- d) Present progressive tense is often used to talk about temporary situations. It is not used to talk about permanent situations, or about regular happening or habits.

Example: She is waiting for you for just a moment.

According to Thomson and Martinet (1986), the present continuous tense is formed with the present tense of the auxiliary verb to be + the present participle (infinitive + ing).

Pattern:

- a) Positive: S + to be (am,is,are) + V-ing + O + C
- b) Negative: S + to be (am,is,are) + not + O + C
- c) Interrogative: To be (am,is,are) + S +V-ing + O + C