

Error Analysis in the Use of Personal Pronouns Made by Eleventh Graders in Writing

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini ditujukan untuk mengetahui jenis-jenis serta penyebab-penyebab kesalahan penggunaan *personal pronouns* oleh siswa kelas sebelas dalam sebuah karangan. Tigapuluh empat siswa kelas sebelas dari SMAN 11 Surabaya merupakan peserta dari penelitian ini. Pendekatan kualitatif digunakan dalam penelitian ini karena peneliti menganalisa dan menjelaskan kesalahan dalam penggunaan *personal pronouns* berdasarkan teori dari Dulay (1982) dan Richard (1974). Hasil dari penelitian ini yaitu bahwa sebagian besar jenis kesalahan yang dilakukan yaitu *misformation*. Kesalahan jenis ini sebagian besar disebabkan oleh *incomplete application of rule*. Mereka tidak dapat mengubah bentuk *personal pronouns* dalam penulisan karangan.

Kata kunci: kesalahan, penulisan *personal pronouns*, kelas sebelas.

Abstract

The study was aimed at finding the types and possible causes of the personal pronoun errors made by Eleventh graders in their composition. Thirty four Eleventh graders of SMAN 11 Surabaya students were the participants of the study. Qualitative approach was used in this study, the researcher analyzed and described the error of the use of personal pronouns based on the theory of Dulay (1982) and Richard (1974). The results of the study was that the most error found in the students' writing was *misformation* error. The error of *misformation* was mostly due to *incomplete application of rule*. They were unable to use the changing form of personal pronouns in writing.

Key words: errors, writing Personal pronouns, Eleventh graders.

INTRODUCTION

In writing, there are some aspects that a student should notice. The aspects are word choice, coherent and correlation, and grammar. The students should choose a proper word to express meaning so that the readers really catch what information they wrote. The information of each paragraph, main idea, and the argumentation of the writer should be coherent. Grammar also plays important role in writing. The use of correct grammar will not confuse the readers. Moreover, error of using grammar will make a serious misunderstanding toward the readers.

However, students often lack awareness of using them correctly (Lestari, 2009). They often put the grammatical aspect aside such as tenses, word order, articles and so on. Besides, writing skill is perceived as the most difficult language skill because it requires a higher level of productive language control than the other skills (Murica, 1983, p. 161). Thus the accuracy of the composition should be considered carefully in order to prevent from decreasing the student's achievement in writing skill.

Personal pronouns are used for replacing person or things. They are *I, you, they, we, she, he, and it*. The form of them will change as they are used

in different using, such as *I* as subject becomes *me* as object. They have five different forms; subject, object pronoun, possessive adjective, possessive pronoun, and reflexive pronoun.

In writing, the uses of personal pronouns are important. It will be complicated if students use inappropriate personal pronouns in writing. For that reason, personal pronouns are taught since in beginner level. However, sometimes the changing form of personal pronoun makes the students can be able to use them properly (Khodijah, 2006).

Khodijah (2006) found that there were still many inappropriate using of personal pronouns made by the students. There were more than 50% students made error in personal pronouns.

According to Khodijah (2006), the cause of errors in the use personal pronouns were mostly because of false concept hypothesized. These causes of errors were due to the poor teaching techniques. But, the identification and justification of errors was not strong enough. Since, this study just identified based on her opinion without asking for clarification of the students (error makers). Moreover, Khodijah (2006) conducted her research in a personal pronouns test. It was considered that the use of personal pronouns were artificial. However, it was different

with the use of personal pronouns in writing. The students were freely to compose a sentence which contains personal pronouns in their writing. If there was a student who made an error in using it, he/she was likely to have a strong reason/cause for using it.

Therefore, it was important to investigate what types and possible causes of the errors in the use of personal pronouns in writing.

METHOD

In this research, the writer used qualitative research because the data of the research were non numerical. It is stated by Johnson and Thristeren (2004, p. 359) that the descriptive qualitative study is a research relying primarily on the collection of qualitative data such as words and pictures. The presented data were in form of words. Yet there were some numerical data processes which presented an occurrence of each error, such as calculating the total sum of omission, addition, misformation, and misordering (types of error) and the total sum of over generalization, ignorance of rule restriction, incomplete application of rule, and false concept hypothesized (causes of errors).

This research was also categorized as a case study. Since, the writer wanted to know the type and the cause of errors of the use of personal pronouns made by the eleventh graders in writing. It was expected that it would help the teacher to discover the difficulties of the students in mastering personal pronouns.

The participants of this study were thirty four eleventh graders of SMAN 11 Surabaya. The writer took students from XI IPS-4 class as the participants.

The researcher chose this class because the students in this class had documented the writing assignment well more. The whole writing assignment given by the teacher could be found in every student's portfolios.

In this study, the source of the data was report text and conversation script made by eleventh graders of SMAN 11 Surabaya. They were found in the students' assignment books. The second was interviewing the students. The interview was needed to clarify the causes of errors of personal pronouns made by the students. Meanwhile, the data of the research were the sentences in the writing and the transcript of recording of the students' statement in interview.

After collecting the data, the analysis of the data were carried out. The first, the writer identified the copy of writing composition of the students to find out the error of personal pronouns. The next step was

the writer classified the errors into types based on the one of categories of errors recommended by Dulay (1982) that is surface taxonomy; omission, addition, misinformation, and misordering. After classifying and identifying the errors, the writer counted the frequency of occurrence of errors on each type of errors. After that, the writer identified and described the factors causing the students make errors in their descriptive composition. The factors were categorized into; over-generalization, ignorance of rule restriction, incomplete application of rule, and false concept hypothesis. After the writer identified the cause of error by his point of view, he clarified the cause of errors by interviewing the students. The writer interviewed a student who represents a group of the same error or one by one if necessary.

The interview processes were audio-recorded. After getting the audio recording, the writer made a transcript of the recordings. The writer changed the audio to be a written script. And finally, the writer searched and identified the statement in the written script to be the indicator of the category of the causes of error. This process was called coding. The next was categorizing. The writer categorized the found statement in the script into the four causes of error categories by Richard (1974). It was needed to clarify the possible causes of error.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Types of Errors.

Forty-three error sentences of personal pronouns were found in the students' writing. Those were made by 26 students from 34 students. These errors were categorized based on the Surface Strategy Taxonomy (Dulay, 1982). The classification of types of error was also identified by the researcher's peer in order to validate the finding.

Table 1. Types of Pronouns Errors

Types of Error	# error sentences	# students
Misformation	17	11
Addition	13	6
Omission	11	8
Misordering	2	1

Table 1 presents the total error sentences which made by students and total students who made the errors of each types of error. The researcher ranked the types of error based on the total error sentences. It was due to the results mostly derived from the sentences. However, there were few differences between addition error and omission error.

The thirteen error sentences of addition were made by six students, meanwhile the eleven error sentences of omission were made by eight students, two students higher than addition error.

It was likely that the researcher found several error sentences made by a student at once. And it was possible that the error sentences were classified into different types. For example, participant 1 made three errors; the first was categorized as omission meanwhile the second and the third were categorized as misformation.

Based on the number of error sentences, the error of misformation dominated the error sentences which found seventeen error sentences. Misformation is characterized by the use of the wrong form of the morpheme or structure (Dulay, 1982, p. 158). The characteristic of misformation errors found in the students' writing were that the students used inappropriate words of personal pronoun for referring something or someone (Dulay, 1982). For example in student number 2;

1. Ade and me go to UNESA to swim in swimming pool in the UNESA.
2. Ade and me is very happy.

It seemed that the student used object pronoun me for subject pronoun I in the sentence. Although the meaning of me and I were the same in Bahasa Indonesia, but they were in different usage.

These errors occurred also in compound sentences. The students used a different personal pronoun type in one sentence; such as subject pronoun for male was written as female and subject pronoun plural was used for singular.

The second was error by addition. It was done by six students. The students add an item which should not be appeared in a well-formed utterance (Dulay, 1982). In this study, the errors were dominated by the use of object pronoun it.

1. If school holiday season arrive, Surabaya zoo will full of. It's cheap price make Surabaya zoo become choice to spend holiday.
2. Crocodile live for twelve to twenty years in the wild. It's usually eat cow, mousedeer.
3. Komodo is the largest lizard on Earth. Its lives in scrub.
4. Snake can be grouping by two, its poisonous snake and unpoisonous snake.

In the sentence number 1, the phrase it's cheap price had a meaning the cheap price of Surabaya zoo. The student assumed that the word it's had the meaning of its. In the second and third

sentences, the word it's and its belonged to it is. These forms were frequently used by many students.

The student who made the forth sentence also used the same errors in the other text. Such as in the conversation script he made as below;

- B :
- A : Sure, I look at you smoking.
- B : No, I am not smoking at all, you are look at the wrong person.
- A : Oh, I am sory its my bad.
- X :
- Y : the dress code is hallowwen costumes
- X : is that right. Oh man. I became ashamed.
- Y : Its okay Lisa. Just enjoy the party.
- X : Its okay.

It seemed that the student could not be able to use subject pronoun it. He added /s/ for subject pronoun it. He could not distinguished between it's and its.

The third was ten error sentences made by eight students, omission. Omission error is a missing of an item that is required for an utterance to be considered grammatical or the absence of an item that must appear in a well-formed utterance (Dulay, 1982). In this study, the researcher found some missing personal pronouns usage in well-formed sentences.

1. Surabaya has been known as the "heroes city". Many People looking for a job in the central city. Many transportation makes pollution in the world. But now Ø has been trees and green.
2. Rhino is also close to extinction because poachers hunt Ø horns and skin.

In the example above, both the sentences were written by omitting the usage of referring words for its subject. The first sentence, the student omitted the subject pronoun. The omitted subject should be referred to Surabaya. Meanwhile in the second one, the student omitted the possessive adjective of the subject pronoun rhino. ... mount bromo has a tool-air. Many people call mount bromo it sand land- because around mount bromo is compared of a vast sand.

Another case of omission was as the sentence above. The student omitted /s/ in the subject it in order to referring possessive pronoun it. The possessive pronoun in this sentence refers to the subject mount bromo.

And the fewest occurrence was misordering with two error sentences which made by a student. Misordering is characterized by the wrong placement

of a morpheme or a group of morpheme in an utterance (Dulay, 1982). In this study, the errors of misordering were only made by one student. She made two erroneous sentences.

1. They animals is nice, sweet, and tame.
2. They animals have strep teeth.

The word animals in those sentences should be placed into the end of the sentence in order to be an appropriate sentence. In other hand, if the word animal was eliminated, it also would be an appropriate sentence.

B. Causes of Errors

The researcher classified the causes of error based on the Richard's (1974) theory of classification of error. Those were the same as the types of error which likely a student had several causes of error at once. These were no differences of rank both from the number of error sentences or the students.

Table 2. Causes of Errors

Causes of Error	# error sentences	# students
Incomplete Application of Rule	21	14
False Concept Hypothesized Over Generalization	14	7
Ignorance of Rule Restriction	5	4
	3	3

Table 2 presents the total error sentences which have been categorized in each types of error. It was found that the most causes of the error were because of incomplete application of rule. Incomplete application of rule is due to student's motivation in achieving communication lessen their motivation to produce a correct sentence (Richards, 1974).

The students interested perhaps primarily in communication. They thought that they did not need to master more than elementary rules of personal pronouns usage. As results, they failed to construct a well-formed sentence in writing. They wrote as what they say in daily.

1. Ade and me is very happy.
2. When the cats see Ø owner, it will follow their owner.

In the first sentence, the student used object pronoun me for subject pronoun I. it seemed that he used it intentionally. He assumed that object pronoun

me and subject pronoun I had the same meaning in Bahasa Indonesia. In addition, he also claimed that he used this form in his daily communication in English.

In the second sentence, the participant omitted using possessive adjective in referring the subject. In the first sentence, the main clause was it will follow their owner, meanwhile in the sub clause; the participant omitted using possessive adjective to refer the subject. He just used possessive adjective their in the main clause but not in the sub clause. He also claimed that the meaning of the sub clause when the cats see owner without possessive adjective was explaining the owner of the cats.

The motivation in achieving English in communication also appeared in the use of possessive adjective its. The students wrote it's as meaning of a possessive adjective its.

The second cause of error was by false concept hypothesized. It was experienced by 7 students. The second cause of error was likely due to faulty rule learning at various levels. Sometimes, these were also due to poor teaching techniques. It creates this faulty comprehension (Richards, 1974).

1. It's lives in sands land.
2. Its has gray scaly skin.
3. They animals is nice, sweet, and tame.

The first and the second were claimed by their writer that both it's and its belonged to it is. The use of these words occurred continuously. It seemed that it's and its might be understood to be a subject pronoun rather than a possessive adjective.

In the third sentence, the presence of word animals was ambiguity. She said that they animals had a meaning as these animals. It seemed that she failed to recognize the meaning of the word they. It was likely that this misunderstanding of the usage of it was experienced since the student learned personal pronouns at the first time.

The third cause of error was over-generalization. It was still related to ignorance of rule restriction that the learners created a deviant structure on the basis of their experience. It seems that the learners tend to use the simple rule to generalize to the other uses.

1. When the cats pregnant, it can give birth to five children at time.
2. Animals this is usually very favored by children because for they, rabbits is animals very funny and please.

In the sentence number 1, the subject in main clause it, referred to the subject of the sub clause, the

cats. The student did not know how to refer something (not human being) in plural; therefore she used singular subject *it* for referring plural things. It was the same with the sentence number 1, the student violated the use of subject pronoun *they* for referring object pronoun *them*.

The fewest cause of error was experienced by three students, Ignorance of Rule Restriction. This cause of errors was experienced by a few participants of the study. Students violated the restriction of existing structure that is the application of rules in which they should not be applied. It was likely that the students had been interfered by L1. It made a false analogy of the sentences.

1. Rhino is also close to extinction because poachers hunt Ø horns and skin.
2. *It* famous are cold blooded animals.
3. Cats have a lot of fur, *her* eyes lit up when night.

From the sentence number 1, the participant omitted using possessive adjective before the word *horns* for referring the subject *Rhino*. Meanwhile, when the participant was asked to explain in Bahasa Indonesia, he claimed that it had had referred the *horns* with the subject *Rhino*. However, when the researcher asked about a word which referring the possessive pronoun of *Rhino*, the student could not show it.

This reason was also claimed by the other three participants. They could explain well as though the inappropriate words they used were still appropriate. They were failure to observe restriction in different types of usage of personal pronouns.

In this study, the researcher also found the tendencies of misformation error with Incomplete Application of Rule. Misformation is characterized by the use of the wrong form of the morpheme or structure (Dulay, 1982, p. 158). The wrong using of form was due to their motivation in communication English only. It made the students prevent to mastery deeper rules. They thought that basic rule was enough. It was appeared that they wrote in their writing composition as they used in daily communication. Table 3 shows the error sentences of each types of error toward each causes of error.

Table 3. Cross tabulation of Types of Errors and Causes of Errors

Types of Error	Causes of Error			
	OG	IRR	IAR	FCH
Omission	2	2	5	2
Addition	1	0	4	8
Misformation	2	1	12	2
Misordering	0	1	0	1

There were also tendency of omission error with Incomplete Application of Rule even in a few number occurrence. The students omitted an item that is required for a well-formed utterance. For example in the sentences below;

1. Rhino is also close to extinction because poachers hunt Ø horns and skin.
2. Now Ø be found in a zoo or seeing animals rhinos.

The absence of an item in the sentence above was because the students neglected the rule in forming sentence. They thought that the reader would understand what the absence item refers to, even though the sentences were not formed well.

It was not the same with Misformation and Omission error, Addition error were mostly because of False Concept Hypothesized. The students seemed to have poor gradation in understanding personal pronouns, especially for subject pronoun *it*. The students seemed unable to distinguish *it*, *its*, and *it's*. Sometimes, they added /s/ for subject pronoun *it*, added /' / for possessive adjective *its*.

It was also likely that the teacher's feedback in teaching-learning process was also insufficient. The teacher did not give enough feedback in the students' writing. Sometimes, the score of the student's writing was the only teacher's feedback.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings above, the types of error which made by the students were mostly misformation error, and the cause of error which most occurred was incomplete application of rule. However, in the previous study by Khodijah (2006), the most cause of error of personal pronoun was false concept hypothesized. In her study, the changing form of personal pronouns and the teacher teaching technique in delivering the material were the main factor of the students' error sentences. However, in the point of view of the researcher, the changing form of personal pronoun was a rule, not a factor. It should be taught whatever it is.

On the other hand, in this study, cause of errors by false concept hypothesized was the same

with Khodijah (2006), that teacher teaching technique in delivering material were also factor of the students' error sentences of personal pronouns (but not the main factor). Even though, personal pronouns were taught many times by the teacher, some occasions by different grade and teacher, the students still made error of personal pronouns.

Based on the conclusion, it is suggested that the teacher teach the students about personal pronouns in detail in order to prevent them to make similar errors. Furthermore, correction and feedback related to the errors made by students should be given by the teacher. Therefore, it is expected that the students would not make the same errors.

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