ORGANIZATION OF GENERIC STRUCTURE IN RECOUNT TEXTS WRITTEN BY THE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

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Abstract

Learning the target language is actually a process of trial and error. It means that the process of language learning always deals with making mistakes. The mistakes happen when the learners use both spoken and written language, such as text. As known, there are twelve types of text, one of them is recount text. This paper aims to describe the organization of generic structure (orientation, sequence of events, and reorientation) in recount texts written by the participants.

This study used error analysis as the design. The data were taken from 15 recount texts, written by the fourth semester students of English Department at STKIP PGRI Ponorogo. The technique of collecting data used was written test composition. The data were analyzed by following the error analysis theory.

The result of the study showed that the organization of generic structure in recount texts was less satisfying, especially in the organization of reorientation aspect. Statistically, the mistakes found in the organization of generic structure were 8 texts without the appropriate reorientation aspect (equal to 53%) and 3 texts without the chronological sequence of events (equal to 20%). In case of orientation aspect, the whole texts provided the adequate orientation.

Keywords: language mistake, generic structure, recount text

INTRODUCTION

Learning the target language is actually a process of trial and error (Huang, 2003: 19). It means that the process of language learning always deals with making mistakes. In line with Huang, Hariri (2012:4856) underlines that the learning of language, particularly foreign language, is a process of producing and correcting the mistakes. He also adds that this process will improve the language learners' mastery level in their learning. In other words, the mistakes will encourage the students to the higher level of language mastery. So, making mistakes cannot be separated from the process of language learning itself. As supported by Indihadi (2010:2), who views the process of making language mistake is integrated with the process of language acquisition and learning. The real example can be easily observed when a baby learns to speak a particular word. At first he/she perhaps only succeed to utter in very unclear sound. During the time he/she produces clearer sound, so the hearer can easily recognize the baby's word. In this phase, the baby actually acquires the language. Then, the process is better known as language acquisition. The process of making mistake is actually not only happened in language acquisition, but also in language learning, both learning second or even foreign language. To specify the language in which the learners learn, James (1998:3) defines it as the target language. Target language (TL) refers to any language which learnt by the learners, and not the language which is acquired (mother tongue).

It cannot be denied when the beginner of language learners try to use the target language, they are possible to make any language mistakes. Extremely, every single learner must be making mistake in the process of learning language. In terms of language mistakes, there are some language elements which commonly trigger the learner in making mistakes. Specifically, those elements can be the spoken and written one. The spoken language element covers pronunciation and intonation, while the written language element covers diction, structure, tenses, and so forth. To know further, this paper tries to describe the mistakes in recount text, especially in case of generic structure organization. In short, this paper comes to the urgent question, how the generic structure is organized?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Normally, people will be able to use a language to communicate with others for many kinds of purposes. The first languages used by people to communicate are commonly called as mother tongue (L1) or first language. According to Brown (2001: 21), the acquisition of mother tongue happens naturally, that is why, some people sometimes do not realize it as the process of language acquisition. Actually, through natural setting, people learnt their mother tongue since they were babies. Corder (in Richards, 1974: 20) adds that the learning of mother tongue is inevitable, as a part of whole maturational process of the child. At the beginning age, the small babies babble and coo, cry, receive and send a number of unusual messages to others. In this phase, we cannot easily recognize the babies' messages. As they reach the end of the first year, babies will make specific attempts to imitate words and speech sounds they hear around them (Brown, 2001: 21), and after that, the babies will use them. When the babies use the languages to say something, they will not directly be able to use the language in a complex and long words construction. Probably, they will utter two-words or three words sentences, such as" *bye-bye Daddy*", and "*gimme toy*". In this phase, it will be easier for an adult to recognize the babies' messages. By the time, the process of first language acquisition will improve more and more.

Krashen (1985: 1) emphasizes the two independent ways of developing ability in second language acquisition. He defined those two ways as acquisition and learning. In addition, he claims that acquisition is a subconscious process identical in all important ways to the process children utilize in acquiring their first language, while learning is a conscious process that results in "knowing about" language.

After acquiring the first language, many people do not stop to learn the second, the third or even the fourth languages. Ellis (1997: 3) states that the languages which are learnt subsequent to the mother tongue are called "second language". Here, the second language does not refer to the learning of second language only, but also the learning of the third, the fourth languages, and even the foreign language learning, while James (1998:3) suggests the use of "target language" (TL) for describing the language to be learnt after the mother tongue. He preferred to use the term "target language" in order to be neutral, rather than using the terms second or foreign language. While Nemser (1971:1) defines the target language (TL) as the language in which communication is being attempted: in the case of a learner it is the language he is learning, when he uses it.

Ellis (1997: 3) defines the second language acquisition as the systematic study of how people acquire a second language. Widdowson (in Ellis, 1997: 3) concludes the second language acquisition as the way in which people learn a language other than their mother tongue, inside or outside of a classroom. Adapted from Ellis' definition, the foreign language acquisition also can be defined as a systematic study of how people acquire a foreign language. In line with Ellis, Johnson (2004: 3) states that the current models of the second language acquisition are linear in nature. They go from the input into the intake to the developing system of the output. Corder (in Richards, 1974: 20) adds that the learning of second language normally begins only after the maturational process is largely completed. Later on, the study of those languages, both the second and the foreign, often referred to as the study of L2.

Learning the first and the second language is quite different in terms of processes. Corder (1973) has noticed, in the first language learning the learners start with no language behavior, while in the second language learning, the learners start with language behavior. In the first language learning, the learners may have the same motivation to learn. They have no option to learn another language, because people around them use that language as mother tongue (L1). But in the learning of a second language, the learners might have various motivations, such as they want to study abroad, they want to live in another country which uses different language, and so forth.

Besides motivation as stated above, there are two major factors which influence the second language learning: those are external and internal factors (Ellis, 1997: 16). The external factor consists of social factors, such as learner's attitude, age, social class, sex and ethnic identity (Ellis, 1997: 198-207), language input and interaction, while internal factor consists of learners' language transfer, learners' cognitive process and linguistic universals. Those factors take the significant role in the area of second/ foreign language acquisition.

Error and Mistake

In the area of second or foreign language learning, the terms "error and mistake" must be carefully differentiated. It needs to be differentiated because those two terms have the different characteristics. The definition of error firstly emerged in the 1967, introduced by Corder. He defined the term 'error' as unrecognized mistake committed by the language learners, and caused by the lack of knowledge. He also added that the errors are 'uncorrected' by the language learners. Brown (2001: 217) defines the term 'error' as a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker, and reflects the competence of the learners. James (1998: 78) underlines the term 'error' as an instance of language use that is unintentionally deviant and is not self corrigible by its author. Ellis (1997: 48-51) states that error is generally viewed as an unwanted form, and defined it as a deviation from the norms of the target language. She differentiates the errors based on the error-maker. Children's errors are seen as transitional forms, while adult native speakers' errors as slip of the tongue. Ellis (1997: 49) also adds that the error made by the learners can be influenced by a variety of factors, for instance the learners might make errors in speaking, but not in writing. Corder (1973: 256) states that the majority of learner's errors are linguistically quite different from those made by a native speaker. In line with the above definitions, Dulay *et al* (1982: 138) define the term errors as the flawed side of learner' speech or writing. They also argued that people cannot learn language without first systematically committing errors.

On the other hand, the term 'mistake' is also commonly used to refer to the learner's inability in using the target language. Corder (1973: 256) argues that all learners make mistake, including the natives when they speak using their mother tongues. James (1998: 78) states that a mistake is either intentionally or unintentionally deviant and self corrigible, while Brown (2001: 217) defines the term 'mistake' as the result of some sort of temporary breakdown or imperfection in the process of producing speech. Furthermore, Corder, James and Brown seem that they agreed that mistake can be self-corrected if the deviation is pointed out by the speaker. The example given by Brown is when the English learner says "John cans sing", but on other occasions says "John can sing", it is classified as mistake because the learner is able to correct his/her speech. On the other hands, if the learner consistently says "John cans sing" in other occasions, he/she has made an error. The point of Brown's examples lies on the consistency of learner's inability in using the language, whether it is self-corrected or not.

From some definitions of the terms 'error and mistake' above, the writer simply differentiates them into these definitions, firstly, errors are happened due to the lack of learners' competencies, while mistakes are happened due to the learners' failure in performing their competencies, both in spoken and written form.

Recount text

As stated by Droga and Humphrey (2003:1) that a language user expresses their thought trough language to achieve the goal. The language used by its user can be both in spoken and written form. The language produced by the speaker called as text. So, when the speakers use the language, basically they create text. The text can be in the spoken and written form as well. That means, the text has very significant role in people's communication. The text cannot be separated from the daily life of language users. Furthermore, Widdowson (2007:4) states that a text is the actual use of language. It means that every language user produces various types of

text to communicate. The types vary according to the ultimate goal of communication. Later on, the types of text are called as genre.

Anderson and Anderson (2003:1-3) distinguish the types of text into literary and factual texts. Literary texts include narrative, poem, and dramatic, while factual texts cover recount, explanation, discussion, report, descriptive, exposition, procedure and response. Each of text has its own elements, as the part of text body. Those elements comprise of generic structure, linguistic feature, and the characteristics. The important point which distinguishes the texts into several lies on its goal, for instance; to describe a person we use descriptive text; to tell the past events we use recount text, to persuade someone we use exposition text; to report the event, occurrence, scientific activity, we use report text, and so forth.

One of the text types which commonly taught in senior high school or even the undergraduate level is recount text. Recount text is used to retell the writer's past events (Anderson and Anderson, 2003:48). In addition, recount text gives the description to readers about the past events chronologically. As mentioned previously, every single text has its own characteristics which mainly depend on the purpose of a text. The characteristics can be identified through linguistics features and the generic structure. As stated by Anderson and Anderson (2003:49) the linguistics features of recount text are; (i) it uses past tense, (ii) the events are chronologically arranged, (iii) it contains the information on who, where, when, where, and how the events happened. Besides that, the generic structure of a recount text comprises of orientation, sequence of events, and re-orientation. Each aspect of generic structure provides the different information. Orientation provides information to answer the questions, where and when it happens, and who is involved, for instance; the text writer provides the beginning information about the place, time, and character. The second aspect is sequence of events which provides the chronological events. The text writer provides any information about the events happened in the past. The appropriate example can be in the following; A writer tells his vacation in a beach. He tells what were done during his vacation until got home. The last aspect of generic structure is reorientation. It provides the conclusion on what has been told in the previous aspect. The conclusion can be the personal judgment by the writer, or even the comment.

METHOD

The method used in this study was descriptive qualitative, which designed as error analysis. It consisted of five major steps, they were; collecting the samples, identifying, describing, explaining, and evaluating the mistakes. The data were taken from 15 recount texts, written by the fourth semester students of English Department at STKIP PGRI Ponorogo. The participants were purposively chosen because they were learning English started from the same level, that was 4 grade students of elementary school. The topic of recount text was the unforgettable experience. The technique of collecting data used was written test composition. The data were analyzed by following the error analysis theory

RESULTS

Based on the identification of the mistakes, the researcher presents the result in the following table:

Table 1: The Identification of Generic Structure

No.	Text	Generic Structure Analysis		
		Orientation	Sequence of Events	Re-orientation
1	Text 1	√	X	√
2	Text 2	√	√	√
3	Text 3	√	√	X
4	Text 4	√	√	X

5	Text 5	√	√	X
6	Text 6	√	√	X
7	Text 7	√	√	X
8	Text 8	√	√	√
9	Text 9	√	√	√
10	Text 10	√	√	√
11	Text 11	√	X	X
12	Text 12	√	√	X
13	Text 13	√	X	√
14	Text 14	√	√	√
15	Text 15	√	√	X
	Total	15	12	7
	Percentage	100%	80%	47%

DISCUSSION

In the beginning of generic structure or orientation aspect, all of the texts are initiated by introducing the character and setting, including the place and time. Based on the findings as presented in the table 1, the orientation aspect is written well. The whole texts provide the orientation aspect. Come to this section, the participants had no problem to write. In detail, seven texts completed with the detail information, while the rest provide at glance but still easily understood. The detail information which is written shows the specific setting, accurate background, the clear characters' involvement, and the dominant role of the writer. While the texts which put orientation at glance only provide the setting and the character but tend to omit the background. At glance orientation makes the information less detail and complete, so it implies to the beginning information caught by the readers. The detail orientation can be seen in the following part; *When I was in 2nd grade of Senior High School, I went to Bali. It was 7 years ago exactly…*(text 6). The orientation aspect in the text 6 is simply written, but informative enough. The setting can be easily identified by the readers, specifically the story took place in Bali when the writer was in the second grade. Then, more specific information about the time added, that is seven years ago. Based on the given information, the readers can guess what the text was talking about.

Another finding in orientation aspect which less detail found in text 15; *On Sunday morning, I went to the market with my sister*. In this section, the information provided at glance no specific information on setting. If there is a question on which market, the readers will fail to answer easily.

After providing the background, character identity, and the setting, the next step is telling the sequence events chronologically. The essence of recount text lies in this section. Based on the findings, as presented in the table 1, there are twelve texts which provide the sequence of events chronologically. It is equal with 80% from the whole text, while the rest, only three texts which do not provide any chronological events. The chronological sequence of events determines the readability of a text. Hence, it implies to the easiness of understanding the text. If the events are not presented orderly, the readers will not understand the texts easily. Below is the example of chronological events, taken from text 10:

> *We started our holiday with big smile. We went to Manggar beach by school bus. In the middle of the trip, we cheated each other. Most of us, were talking about our feelings about that holiday. Besides did cheating, many students also sang. It was so nice trip.*

Based on the data above, the readers will easily identify the sequence of events, presented in the text. This part informs the readers about the things experienced by the writer chronologically. Another example is presented below:

> *For the first day, we went to museum. There were a lot of things to see, such as former prison used in war period, the documentation of war, and vehicle used for battle. The second day, we went to place which designed as a forest. This place was functioned for hiding from the enemy....(Text 14).*

Based on the excerpt taken from the text 14, the readers will not get the difficulty to identify the chronological events. The writer puts the information about her trip to a museum in Vietnam. The museum which visited then completed with the information about the objects inside. The next day, the writer moved to different place, but still in the same city. Such kinds of information continuously provided in text 14, until the last of the event.

Furthermore, below is the example of problematic texts, which provide the sequence of events less chronologic. "*In there I met our friends. Many objects could be seen. We are happy and enjoy to travel*" (text 11). In very short information as presented above, the readers will not easily catch the chronological events. The writer only provides one event. As required, the recount text must provide more than one event, but in fact, the writer failed to fulfill. The writer told the incomplete information to what has been done in the story. Furthermore, the writer put reorientation, as his statement that he was so happy to travel. The last sentence is actually the personal judgment of the writer.

The next aspect of generic structure is reorientation. Reorientation displays how the writer puts his/her conclusion on the experienced events. For instance, talking about the nice vacation, perhaps the writer will simply draw the conclusion by saying; "*What an exciting holiday! I will go there again someday*".

Referring to the result of analysis, as presented in table 1, there are eight texts which are not providing reorientation. The amount is equal to 53% from the total text. Below is the example of texts which provide reorientation; "*So, holiday in Sarangan lake with my family was so interesting*" (text 1). …"*It became the great day for us and until now we do not forget that day*" (text 10)… "*I felt so tired happy, but I was happy*" (text 13)…"*For me, Holiday in Vietnam was very memorable experienced that I had*" (text 14). From the three excerpts of text, the writers put their judgments/conclusions on how he/she felt.

CONCLUSIONS

Referring the result of analysis, the organization of generic structure in recount text, written by the VI semester students of STKIP PGRI Ponorogo is less satisfying. It is due to some amount of mistakes which still found in the text organization, especially in the organization of reorientation aspect.

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