GRAMMATICAL ERRORS
OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
IN SPEAKING ENGLISH

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ABSTRACT

This research primarily deals with grammatical error analysis. It describes the grammatical errors in speaking skill made by the eighth grade students at second semester of SMPN 24 Bandar Lampung in 2016/2017 academic year. Data for the study are the conversation of students that are splitted into ten groups The grammatical errors are classified based on Comparative Taxonomy, they are; developmental errors, interlingual errors, ambiguous errors, and other errors. Besides classifying the errors, the research also investigates sources of the errors. This is qualitative approach in which the data are obtained from the students' English conversation. The result of this study shows that the students committed errors in every type of Comparative Taxonomy. The most error that students made was interlingual errors. It means the students' mother tongue interfered them in speaking English. Based on the observation and interview, the possible causes of students' grammatical errors were interlingual transfer, intralingual transfer, context of learning and communication strategy.

Keywords: Comparative Taxonomy; grammatical errors; English speaking.

INTRODUCTION

Speaking English and mastering its grammar are not easy to do for the students who are new in learning English because they face different conditions, moreover in Indonesia, English is rarely used in daily activity. Students commonly use English when they are in specific occasion; for example, in teaching and learning process in the classroom. In the result of that, the students usually commit errors in speaking English.

According to Chomsky, as quoted by Dulay (1982), says that errors are resulted from lack of knowledge of rules of the language. It means that something that should not happen, but it is done by the students without realizing it. Especially in a conversation or speaking, it usually occurs when the students do not understand the use of grammar. In this case he classifies the categories of error analysis into four kinds at taxonomy named Linguistic Category Taxonomy, Surface Strategy Taxonomy, Comparative Taxonomy, and Communicative Effect Taxonomy. Each category has different way to classify or identify the errors that are made by the learners.

Errors in foreign language teaching especially in English are the cases which are difficult enough to avoid. It is inevitable that all learners make mistakes and commit errors. However, that process can be impeded through realizing the errors and operating on them according to

the feedbacks given. Corder (1981) and Norish (1983) say errors may occur because of human factor in mastering the target language such as the limitation of memory, psychological problem and misunderstanding about the material of subject. In another side, the learners never recognize their errors or they never know that they have made errors. As a result, errors must be viewed positively. In addition, the use of error analysis (EA) and appropriate corrective techniques can aid effective learning and teaching of English (Darus, 2009).

In spite of the fact, many teachers try to only analyze the errors without paying attention to the sources of the errors. Nevertheless, it is also important to find out the sources because the teacher has to know why his students commit the errors, which are found in writing and speaking of second and foreign language learners (Richard, 1974). Teachers who can analyze and treat errors effectively are better equipped to help their students become more aware of their errors. This is supported by Krishnamy (2015), who explains that error analysis enables teachers to find out the sources of errors and take pedagogical precautions towards them. Thus, the analysis of learner language has become an essential need to overcome some questions and propose solutions regarding different aspects.

Furthermore, according to Chomsky, as quoted by Dulay (1982), that errors are classified into four kinds of taxonomy named *Linguistic Category Taxonomy, Surface Strategy Taxonomy, Comparative Taxonomy, and Communicative Effect Taxonomy.* Each category has different way to identify, classify, and analyze the errors that are made by the learners. There are some previous studies that classified and identified the errors by using *Linguistic Category Taxonomy* and *Surface Strategy Taxonomy* (Darus, 2009, Kovac, 2011, Sokeng, 2014, Nonkukhetkhong, 2013 Thomas, 2014). On the other hand, the researcher was interested to analyze the errors by using different taxonomy, *Comparative Taxonomy*. She wanted to know the different classification of errors by using this taxonomy because it classifies the errors that affected by students' mother tongue and language development (Dulay, 1982). In short, the researcher formulated the problem as follows:

1. What types of grammatical errors are made by the students in speaking English based on Comparative Taxonomy?
2. What are the sources of the students' grammatical errors in speaking English?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The population of this study consisted of 38 eighth grade students from SMPN 24 Bandar Lampung in academic year 2016/2017. They were selected from eighth grade students in the school. The research subject was one of the six classes of eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 24 Bandar Lampung. This class consisted of 21 males and 17 females. The researcher analyzed the grammatical errors that were committed by the students of this class in doing conversation using English. The topic of conversation was taken by the topic they have learnt. It was about "Daily Activity".

The key instrument in collecting the data was the researcher. The activities which were lasted during her research were observed by the researcher as the nonparticipant observer and recorded ten conversations After collecting the data, the researcher identified, classified, and

analyzed the errors based on *Comparative Taxonomy* (developmental errors, interlingual errors, ambiguous errors, and other errors), and investigated the sources. The conversation were recorded by the researcher. Afterwards, she transcribed the data and analyzed them.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
Result

The researcher identified the data that were already classified into four types of Comparative Taxonomy. She identified the data by grouping the errors. According to Dulay (1982), four types of Comparative Taxonomy are developmental errors, interlingual errors, ambiguous errors, and other errors.

The researcher counted the percentage of each error that the students committed while doing English conversation. The following table is the frequency of the students' grammatical errors based on the English conversation.

**Table 1. The Proportion of Students' Grammatical Errors
in Speaking English**

No.	Types of Errors	Frequency	Percentage
1	Developmental Errors	14 items	33.33%
2	Interlingual Errors	18 items	42.86%
3	Ambiguous Errors	3 items	7.14%
4	Other Errors	7 items	16.67%
	Total	42 items	100%

As we can see on Table 1, most students make grammatical errors at the level of interlingual errors (42.86%). The second was developmental errors with the percentage 33.33%. Other errors were the third error that the students made (20%), moreover ambiguous errors became the last error that least student made respectively (10%).

Discussion

In this part, the researcher would like to discuss about the finding of the analysis of grammatical errors in speaking English produced by the participants of eighth grade students.

Types of the Students' Grammatical Errors in Speaking English

Following are the several samples of students' grammatical errors in speaking English based on Comparative Taxonomy (see Appendix 1). There are four types of Comparative Taxonomy based on Dulay, they are: developmental errors, interlingual errors, ambiguous errors, and other errors.

1) **Developmental Errors**

Developmental errors, as stated by Dulay (1982), are errors similar to those made by children learning the target language as their first language. In this research, the students' omission of the article and the past tense marker was classified as developmental because

these are also found in the speech of children learning English as their first language. The following data presented the samples of the errors committed by the students when they spoke English:

Student 1 : What do you do in the evening?

Student 2 : *I prepare study.* *(I prepare **to** study)

Dulay states that this type of error also made by the children who learn English as their native language. In the data display, developmental errors are in the second position with 33.33%. It means there are still many students made the errors by omitted the article and some other grammatical rules. They may not know the function of them in constructing an English sentence or utterance. For example, most of them ignored to put article in their conversation, whereas an article is useful to tell about the noun, which aimed to discuss by the speakers.

2)　Interlingual Errors

Based on Dulay (1982), interlingual errors are said to occur due to the interference of L_1 into L_2. In this case, the students' mother tongue creates problems for the learner to learn new language. The following data are the samples of the errors that were committed by the students while doing the conversation:

Student 1 : What do you do in the afternoon?

Student 2 : *I ready to lunch.* *(I *am* ready to *have* lunch.)

Interlingual errors are the errors that mostly the students committed. From 42 items, interlingual errors got 18 items with percentage 42.86%. The students' mother tongue influences them in speaking English. They assume that the structure in their first language is similar to English structure. Because interlingual errors are the most error that made by the students, the teacher should give the students clear explanation that English structure is different from the students' first language and they cannot translate a sentence or an utterance into English without knowing its structure.

3)　Ambiguous Errors

Dulay (1982) sstates that ambiguous errors could be classifying equally well as developmental or interlingual. That is because these errors 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. The following data are the samples of the errors:

Student 1 : What do you do in the evening?

Student 2 : *I read book English.* *(I read *an/the English book*).

Based on ten conversations that had been recorded, among forty two items ambiguous errors had three items. In addition, ambiguous errors are fewest errors that the students made in conversation (7.14%). It means only three students who made this type of errors. Dulay classifies these errors because these errors 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.

Ambiguous errors are classifying equally well as developmental or interlingual errors. That is because these errors 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. In this case, the students made two types of errors at once and the errors could be classifying as developmental errors and interlingual errors.

4) Others Errors

According to Dulay (1982), others errors, as also knows as unique errors, are complete without a grab bag for item that do not fit into any other category. The following data are the samples of the errors that were committed by the students while doing the conversation:

Student 1 : ***What's*** do you do in the early morning? *(**What** do you do in the
 early morning?

Student 2 : I wake up from the bedroom in the early morning. What about you?

The last errors made by the students are other errors. Tarigan explains that the type of errors cannot be ignored by the researcher, because it can be a view or an idea that may become the interesting part for the researcher in analyzing the errors. In line with Tarigan, Dulay states that a study of such errors could provide useful insights into specific differences to the organization of linguistic input. They are those, which simply do not fit in any of the above mentioned categories of this taxonomy. Based on those theories, the researcher found the students made 6 items in percentage 16.67% of 42 items. Other errors are also known as unique errors.

Sources of the Students' Grammatical Errors in Speaking English

Besides identifying, classifying, analyzing the types of errors, the researcher also did the same thing in finding the sources of the errors that made by the students. The sources of errors are some factors that cause the students made errors. Brown (2000) classifies them into four kinds, interlingual transfer, intralingual negative transfer, context of learning, and communication strategy. The researcher identified them by drawing a table for making her easy to analyze the sources of errors. The table below is the sample of analyzing the sources of errors.

There are four major sources of errors based on Brown (2000), those are interlingual transfer, intralingual transfer, context of learning, and communication strategy. Based on the data, the researcher found the four types of sources caused the students made the grammatical errors in speaking English.

1) Interlingual Transfer

The beginning stage of learning a second language is characterized by a good deal of interlingual transfer (from the native language). Interlingual transfer, as stated by Brown (2000:224), is the use of pattern from the mother tongue. The following are the examples of this source when the students speaking English:

a. Student 1: ***What do you do <u>in the</u> <u>night</u>? *in the evening***
     Student 2: I prefer study.
b. Student 1: What do you do in the afternoon?
     Student 2: ***I wash <u>plate.</u> *dishes***

The examples above have interferences from the pattern of the students' mother tongue, Bahasa Indonesia. In the example (a), it is incorrect because there is a wrong perception. Mostly, the student will think that *malam* in Bahasa is *night* in English whereas night time in English is the time for sleeping. Related to the utterance, it should be "evening", that related to that utterance. The example (b), the word *plate* in English is *piring* in Bahasa Indonesia, It is not wrong when the speaker say it in another context. For this context, the appropriate word for *piring* is dish because commonly the native speaker does not say literally *washing plate*, but the correct one is *washing dishes.*

2) Intralingual Transfer

According to Brown, intralingual interference has the negative transfer of items within the target language or put another way the incorrect generalization of rules within the target language. Here are the examples of the intralingual transfer (overgeneralization) when the students made English conversation:

a. Student 1: ***When do you can study?***
   Student 2: I study at 19.00 – 21.00.
b. Student 1: ***Where you watch television?***
   Student 2: In my house.
c. Student 1: What do you do in the afternoon?
   Student 2: ***I ready to lunch.***

Those examples above have overgeneralization rules. The example a, the student wanted to say *kapan kamu bisa belajar* without knowing how to construct a good sentence in English. He translated directly before knowing the correct pattern. The example b, the student did not put *do* in the utterance. In English structure, we have to know how to construct a good introgative sentence. If there is no modal "do" in that sentence, it means the utterance is a statement and not an *introgative* sentence. Meanwhile, in the example c, the speaker did error while answering the question. He aimed to say *saya siap untuk makan siang*. It can be inferred that the students have done errors in interlingual transfer because of negative interference of mother tongue. Therefore, there must be to be *am* and put in predicate between *to* and *lunch*. These errors may come from the incorrect generalization of rules within target language.

3) Context of Learning

Another source of errors, as stated by Brown, is context of learning. Context of learning refers to the classroom with their teacher and the materials in the context of untutored from the teacher. Students often make errors because of misleading explanation from the teacher, faulty presentation of structure of word in a textbook, or even because of a pattern that was memorized in drill but not properly contextualized.

The students make errors in doing English conversation indicated that they have error in the context of learning. It may come from teacher's misleading when they have done teaching and learning in the class and from reading text books when they study by themselves. Here are

the examples of context of learning, as the source of errors, based on the students' English conversation:

a. Student 1: What do you do in the evening?
    Student 2: ***I reading book.***
b. Student 1: ***What do you do after wake up?***
    Student 2: I clean bed.
c. Student 1: What do you do in the early morning?
    Student 2: ***I wake up from the bedroom in the early morning.***

From the example a above the question in the verbal utterance and the answer should also be in the verbal. In this example, the student 2 said *I reading book* whereas the student 1 asked him in verbal by using "Simple Present Tense". This utterance might be turn to "Simple Present Continuous Tense" if there was added to be *am.* The appropriate one is he had to omit *–ing* after *read*.

For the example b, the student committed error in the phrase, "after wake up". It should be *after waking up*. *After* in this utterance is preposition so after "after" must be followed by "noun". However, "wake up" is not a noun. If he wants to make it into a noun, he has to change the form to be a gerund. Gerund is a word that ends in *-ing* which is made from a verb, and which is used like a noun. So, the correct one is *waking up*.

The incorrect one in the example c of this source is the perception between *wake up* and *get up*. Learners, who learn English as foreign language, such as in Indonesia, have a perception that *wake up* means get out of the bed. Even though, *wake up* means become conscious after sleeping. If they want to say get out of bed, they may use *get up* instead of *wake up.* In addition, they do not need to put *from the bed or bedroom* after *get up*, because *get up* already means so without that phrase.

4) **Communication Strategy**

A communication strategy is the conscious employment of verbal or nonverbal mechanism for communicating an idea when people linguistics forms are for some reasons not readily available to the learner at a point in communication. When the students use language, they may have some strategies that is used in their communication both verbal and nonverbal. Here are the examples of students' grammatical errors that caused by communication strategy based on the students' English conversation:

a. Student 1: What time do you help mother?
    Student 2: ***I help mother are delapan until sepuluh o'clock.***
b. Student 1: I play football, what about you?
    Student 2: ***Clean the room.***
c. Student 1: I play football, what about you?
    Student 2: ***I PlayStation.***

In example a, it shows that the student 2 did not know how to say *delapan* and *sepuluh* in English so he switched it into his native language, Bahasa, to make the listener understand about what he meant for. It is an error caused by communication strategy. On the other hand,

Error in example b is the student did not insert the subject in that utterance. So, it makes the utterance become ambiguous. The first one can be a statement and second one can be an imperative utterance. In Bahasa, the utterance without subject is allowed, the listener can still get the meaning what the speaker says about, but in English the utterance without subject can turn into ambiguous. In English utterance, the speaker either has to put the subject or it will be an imperative utterance. It means the speaker has to put the subject in that utterance to make the listener clear about what the speaker says.

Error in example c is committed by the student 2. He might consider that "PlayStation" was already a verb, whereas it is only a noun. "PlayStation" means a series of video game consoles. If he did not construct the utterance syntactically, it means the listener also didn't get the meaning. Therefore, he had to add a verb before "PlayStation".

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This research provides description of the students' grammatical errors in speaking English based on Comparative Taxonomy. There are four types of errors in Comparative Taxonomy; developmental errors, interlingual errors, ambiguous errors, and other errors. The most errors that many students committed in English conversation was interlingual errors. Errors are said to occur due to the interference of L_1 into L_2. In this case, the students' mother tongue creates problems for the learner to learn new language. It can be concluded that the students' mother tongue interfered them in learning English, especially in speaking.

After the researcher has analyzed and found the finding of the research, the researcher tries to give contribution of the research to the teaching learning English for better way. Correction of errors is as important as identification and description of them. Besides finding the errors, the teacher should also investigate the sources. It will help them to understand the students' factors in committed errors.

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