

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT ERRORS MADE BY SIXTH SEMESTER ENGLISH EDUCATION STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This research used descriptive quantitative method. This research aimed to find out subject-verb agreement errors made by sixth semester English Education students of Universitas Bengkulu and to find out the possible causes of the errors. The samples of this research were sixth semester English Education students of Universitas Bengkulu in 2016/2017 academic year. The data were collected by conducting writing. The results of the data were analyzed descriptively by using Surface Strategy Taxonomy by Dulay et al (1982) to analyze the types of errors and theory of causes of errors by Richards (1974) to analyze the causes of errors. The result shows that there were 3 types of subject-verb agreement errors found in students' essays. The errors were omission (49 %), addition (25 %) and misinformation (26 %). Another result shows that there were 2 possible causes of subject-verb agreement errors in this research. They were interlingual errors (2 %) and intralingual & developmental errors (98 %).

Keywords : Errors, Subject-Verb Agreement, Student.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kuantitatif. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menemukan kesalahan subject-verb agreement yang dilakukan oleh mahasiswa semester enam Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Universitas Bengkulu beserta kemungkinan penyebab kesalahan tersebut. Sample dalam penelitian ini adalah mahasiswa semester enam Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Universitas Bengkulu tahun akademik 2016/2017 yang. Data penelitian dikumpulkan dengan cara mengadakan tes tertulis. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa ada 3 jenis kesalahan subject-verb agreement errors yang

terdapat dalam esay mahasiswa. Jenis-jenis kesalahan yang ada adalah omission (49 %), addition (25 %) dan misinformation (26 %). Hasil lain menunjukkan bahwa ada 2 kemungkinan penyebab kesalahan subject-verb agreement dalam penelitian ini, yakni kesalahan interlingual (2 %) dan kesalahan intralingual & developmental (98 %).

Kata kunci : eror, subject-verb agreement, mahasiswa

INTRODUCTION

In learning English, grammar is a language aspect that is generally taught to learners. Ur (1996) noted that grammar is defined as words put together to make correct sentences. It does not only affect how the units of words are combined in order to make correct sentences but also affects their meaning. In short, grammar is a study about how to arrange words into sentence in correct grammatical order. Harmer (2007) states, "Grammar can thus be partly as knowledge of word can go where and what form this word should take. Studying grammar means knowing how different grammar element can be strung together to make chain of words".

Grammar in English deals with construction of words and sentences to form a meaning. Wilcox (2014) states that grammar involves the rules and relationships through which we construct meaningful sounds, words, and sentences. She also suggest that it can mean a system of rules which allows the users of the language in question to create meaning, by building both meaningful words and larger constructions of sentences. Similar to Wilcox, Leech and Svartvik (2004) claim that Grammar in English involves units of language, from word to discourse or text, to build meaningful and communicative constructions of words or sentences.

In English Education Department of Universitas Bengkulu, grammar is considered to be very important. Thus, it is taught gradually for 4 semesters (Universitas Bengkulu, 2013). This lesson

is taught in 7 classes : Structure 1, Structure 2, Structure 3, Structure 4, Morphology, Syntax and Functional Grammar. Every next semester students take a higher-level grammar lesson so that their grammar proficiency can be developed. Students are required to finish all the 7 grammar classes as primary subjects. For Structure classes (Structure 1 – 4), students cannot take the next grade of Structure class if they do not finish the previous class with minimum score of D. At the end of their studies, students are required to obtain TOEFL score of 500.

One of the topics discussed in grammar is subject-verb agreement. Quirk et al (1985) states that the agreement between the subject and the verb is the relationship between two grammatical units which one of them displays a particular feature that is suitable with a displayed feature in the other. A brief description of subject-verb agreement also comes from Svartvik & Sager (1986), where they state that subject-verb agreement demands that a subject in the singular is followed by a finite verb in the singular and that a subject in the plural is followed by a finite verb in the plural.

In English, subject-verb agreement is very important to be learned. Dorn in Nayan (2009) pointed out that the sentences created by words and phrases are the essential blocks of meaning that enable us to communicate thoughts. If they are not constructed carefully, reading them can be very difficult. Dorn also stated that most of basic usage and grammar slips in written English are those associated with verbs. Based on the fact

above, every English learner really needs to master this grammar element in order to write effectively and communicate their thoughts in well-written sentences or correct utterances.

Unfortunately, based on observation of the researcher, errors in subject-verb agreement are still found among English Education students, especially among students of 6th semester. From the observation, the researcher found that many English Education students still committed errors in using subject-verb agreement in many occasions, from presentation to writings. Though they had learned Structure 1 – Structure 4 and other grammar classes, they still had problems in subject verb-agreement. This fact is surprising, remembering that subject-verb agreement is always used in almost every English Education class and the students are expected to at least understand the use of it in simple form.

There are some previous studies related with the researcher's research topic. Wahyudi (2012) conducted a mini research with title "Error Analysis on Subject-Verb Agreement : The Case of a University Student in Indonesia." The research showed that kind of subject-verb agreement errors found was misinformation, followed by omission.

Another study was conducted in 2014 by Mbau, Marhum and Muhsin with title "An Analysis on The Subject-Verb Agreement Errors in Writing Paragraph Made by the Second Semester Students of English Department." The result of the study showed that error on basic subject-verb agreement was 70%, followed with error on -ess ending (14,15%), the using expressions of quantity (9.43%), the using there + be (5.66%), and none errors (0%) about some irregularities. In this research 3 main causes of subject-verb agreement

errors are intralingual transfer, context of learning and communication strategies.

In 2015, Karim, Fathema and Hakim wrote a journal entitled "Analysis of Errors In Subject-Verb Agreement Among Bangladeshi TertiaryLevel EFL Learners." The study revealed that students committed highest number of errors of agreement between verb and plural subject followed by the error of agreement between verb and singular subject. The least error is seen in case of agreement error between verb and relative pronoun.

The researches above show various results of how language learners made errors in subject-verb agreement. In this occasion, the researcher is interested in conducting a research with the same topic but different theories to categorize the errors and the possible causes of errors.

Based on the fact and theories above, the researcher is curious to find out what kinds of error occur the most and what makes the errors occur. The researcher would like to conduct a research to explain this phenomenon. The researcher chooses to describe subject-verb agreement errors because this grammatical element is very important for English Education students in improving grammar proficiency and accuracy of the meaning. For the samples, the researcher choose 6th semester students because they have been learning grammar actively and passively in 7 different grammar classes for 6 semesters. Other students from different semester are not chosen because 8th semester students are still working on their thesis and students from semester 2 – 4 haven't studied some advanced grammar classes. The title of the research is "Subject-Verb Agreement Errors Made By 6th Semester English Education Students." By doing this research, the researcher will explain what

kinds of error occur the most and what the possible causes of errors are.

METHOD

This research used descriptive method. Margono (2010) states that a descriptive research is one of the researches which aim is to describe data and characteristics used to describe the population. The purpose of using descriptive method is to gain accurate, factual and accurate data in doing research. This research was conducted on both quantitative and qualitative approach. Quantitative approach was used to find out the percentage and number of data while qualitative approach was used to categorize data into several different categories.

This study took sixth semester English Education students of Universitas Bengkulu as the samples. Total number of the samples was 65. The sample was taken by using total sampling technique. Due to the fact that the number of sample was less than 100, the researcher took all of them as the sample (Arikunto, 2006).

The instrument for data collection in this research was semi-guided writing test. Semi-guided writing test was used to gather data of subject-verb agreement errors. The kind of the text for writing test was descriptive text. The researcher provided 5 titles to be developed into an argumentative essay. The titles were : 1) TV programs nowadays, 2) Violence against women and kids, 3) What are the best requirements to be a model teacher?, 4) Dating is good or not good(?), 5) Death penalty : pro or against? The titles and form of instrument had been consulted and validated by experts. This was aimed to make the instrument able to stimulate students to produce language in the most natural way.

The data of this research were collected by giving students semi-guided writing test. The researcher provided the students 5 titles to be developed into an argumentative essay to samples and they were asked to choose one of the titles and write at least 4 paragraphs of argumentative related to the chosen title. To make the language production as natural as possible, the researcher prohibited the use of smart phone or any other device or media that might be used to gain additional information such as ideas to write the paragraphs or information about grammatical rules, especially subject-verb agreement. The test was done in 40 minutes time allocation.

After collecting the data from students, the researcher analyzed each argumentative essays by reading or memoing, describing, classifying, and interpreting the whole data gathered from semi-guided writing test (Gay and Airasian, 2000). The first step of data analysis was reading all argumentative essays from the students to find out subject-verb agreement errors. The second step was describing the types and the possible causes of subject-verb agreement errors in the essays. The third step was classifying all the data into several different categories both in terms of types of errors and possible causes of errors. In classifying types and possible causes of errors, the researcher used theory of types of errors from Dulay et al (1982) and theory of causes of errors by Richards (1974).

The researcher used codes in classifying types and causes of errors. For the types of errors, the codes were OM for omission, AD for addition, MI for Misinformation and MIS for misordering. For the possible causes of errors, the codes were INT for interlingual errors and INTR for interlingual and developmental

errors. The researcher also gave description for interlingual and developmental errors by mentioning the sub-categories of that cause of errors. They were Overgeneralization, Ignorance of Rule Restrictions, Incomplete Applications of Rules and False Concept Hypothesized.

In counting the number of percentage for each category, the researcher used percentage of formula from Arikunto (2006) as follow :

$$P = \frac{f}{n} \times 100\%$$

Where :

P = Percentage

f = Frequency of sub category

n = Number of pattern

A valid instrument is the one that measures what is supposed to measure. High validity instrument is legal to be used while low validity instrument cannot be used. In order to achieve a good and reliable writing test, the researcher validated the test by using content validity technique. According to Bollen (1989) in Drost (2012), content validity is a qualitative type of validity in which the domain of the concept is made clear and the analyst or expert judges whether the measures fully represent the domain. If it is good already, the instrument is categorized as valid. Therefore, the researcher consulted the content of the test to experts or lecturers who have mastery in linguistic and writing. The experts who validated the writing test were Drs. Masrul Aziz, Dip. TESL., M.A and Zahrida, S.S., M.Hum. Both of the experts had expertise in grammar and writing.

The procedure of this research is as follow :

1. The researcher designed subject-verb agreement test in the form of semi-guided writing test.

2. The researcher validated the instrument by consulting to the experts.
3. The researcher revised the instrument.
4. The researcher conducted subject-verb agreement test.
5. The researcher collected the instruments from the sample.
6. The researcher analyzed and classified the types and possible causes of subject-verb agreement errors committed by the sample in the test.
7. The researcher displayed the data in the table of analysis.
8. The researcher described the results of the research.
9. The researcher drew the conclusion.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

a. Types of Subject-Verb Agreement Errors

After the process of data collection and data analysis, the researcher found 3 types of subject-verb agreement errors in this research. They were omission, addition and misinformation. The frequency of subject-verb agreement errors was 225. The detailed information about the types of subject-verb agreement errors can be seen in the following table :

Table 1. Types of Subject-Verb Agreement Errors Found Among 6th Semester English Education Students of Universitas Bengkulu

Number	Type of Errors	Frequency	Percentage
1	Omission	111	49 %
2	Addition	55	25 %
3	Misinformation	59	26 %
4	Misordering	0	0 %
Total		225	100 %

From the table above, it can be seen that omission was the most dominant subject-verb agreement errors with frequency 111 and

percentage 49 %, followed with misinformation with frequency 59 and percentage 26 % and addition with frequency 55 and percentage 25 %.

b. Possible Causes of Subject-Verb Agreement Errors

In this research, the researcher found that interlingual and intralingual & developmental errors became the possible causes of subject-verb agreement errors. Based on analysis of the researcher, 229 items of causes of errors were found in 226 subject-verb agreement errors detected. The number of causes of errors and types of errors did not match each other because there were 4 items of errors that contained 2 causes of error at once. Of 229 items of causes of errors, 4 were classified as interlingual errors and the rest 225 were classified as intralingual and developmental errors. The number and percentage of each possible cause of errors can be seen in the following table

Table 2. Possible Causes of Subject-Verb Agreement Errors

Number	Possible Causes of Errors	Frequency	Percentage
1	Interlingual Error	4	2 %
2	Intralingual and Developmental Error	225	98 %
Total		229	100 %

In this research, it was found that interlingual factor influenced 2 % of all subject-verb agreement errors. 4 out of 225 subject-verb agreement errors in this research were categorized as interlingual errors. On the other hand, in this research intralingual and developmental errors influenced all the 225 subject-verb agreement errors found. In other words, the percentage of this possible

cause of errors was 100 %. The errors were then divided into 4 sub-categories : overgeneralization (31 %), ignorance of rule restrictions (0,8 %), incomplete action of rules (38 %) and false concept hypothesized (26 %).

DISCUSSIONS

a. Types of Subject-Verb Agreement Errors

1. Omission

In this research, 111 out of 225 errors were classified as omission. The percentage of this error was 49 %. Omission on verb is the most frequent form of omission errors with frequency 79 and percentage 71 %, followed by omission on object with frequency 14 and percentage 13 %, omission on subject with frequency 11 and percentage 10% and other forms of omission with frequency 7 and percentage 6 %. Here are examples of sentences which contain omission errors :

1. *Furthermore, dating are **happen** because lack of religious education by parents also lack of protecting.*
2. *As matter of fact, while the event of brawling student in Wamena Papua (2016), few **TV station** support the student whereas few of other support the government.*

From examples above, we can see that the first sentence contains omission errors in which the writer did not add suffix –s after word “*happen*” and “*movie.*” Errors occur on subject in word “*happen*” and object in word “*movie.*” In second sentence, the student did not add suffix -s in word “*station*” although word “*few*” had been written before. Such error happened on subject of the sentence. Among 61 students, 48 students committed this kind of error which means 78 percent of the students committed this kind of error.

2. Addition

In this research, 55 out of 225 errors were detected as addition. The percentage of this error was 25%. Addition of verb -be after verb is the most frequent form of addition errors with frequency 23 and percentage 42

%, followed by addition of gerund after verb with frequency 8 and percentage 14%, addition of suffix -s after verb with frequency 7 and percentage 13% and other forms of omission with frequency 17 and percentage 31%. Here are examples of sentences which contain addition errors:

1. Consider the fact that Taliban shooting women and kids who wanted to go to school as Malala.
2. However, many TV programs is contain the rubbish information not the education information.

From examples above, we can see that the students added unnecessary items or words in the utterances. In the first sentence, the suffix -ing is not required to be added in word "shoot.". In the second sentence, the student added verb -be before word "contain" which is not necessary to do. 36 out of 61 students committed this type or errors which means that 59% of the students committed this error.

3. Misinformation

In this research, misinformation is the use of wrong form of verb. While in omission the items do not appear, in misinformation items are supplied by

learners but in incorrect form. In this research, 59 out of 225 errors were classified as misinformation which means that the percentage of this error was 26%. Wrong form of verb -be is the most frequent form of misinformation errors with frequency 17 and percentage 28%, followed by wrong form of verb -has with frequency 16 and percentage 27%, wrong form of verb -does with frequency 8 and percentage 13% and other forms of misinformation with frequency 19 and percentage 32%. Here are examples of sentences which contain addition errors:

1. Since I know that almost all of TV programs on TV recently is very bad.
2. Dating have a good effect for the people.

In the first sentence, there is error where student used wrong form of verb be. The sentence *Since I know that almost all of TV programs on TV recently is very bad* shows us that the student used verb -is instead of verb -are even though the subject of the sentence is in plural form. In the second sentence, the student committed misinformation errors where he or she used verb -have instead of verb -has in a sentence that used singular subject (dating). 32 out of 61 students committed this type or errors which means 52% of students committed this type of errors.

b. Possible Causes of Subject-Verb Agreement Errors

1. Interlingual Errors

In this research, it was found that interlingual factor influenced 2% of all subject-verb

agreement errors. 4 out of 225 subject-verb agreement errors in this research were categorized as interlingual errors. Here is the example paragraph that contains interlingual errors :

*Divorce can also **decrease** by dating. All know that divorce is happened because some couples feel that they are not matched anymore. This case shows that approachment is important before going to marriage. So that, dating is a good media to minimize the case of divorce. Divorce can **minimize** because couples already know their mates. They know their feelings, behaviours and secret of each other. So that, they will not have divorce in their life.*

The paragraph above seems well-constructed. But after reading the whole text by using context of the topic, the researcher found out that they were incorrectly constructed. The phrases and sentences above were meant to be in passive form, but the student wrote them in active form. What the student wanted to write were “*Divorce also can be decreased by dating*” and “*Divorce can be minimized because couples already know their mates.*” Unfortunately, the student used sentence structure from native language (Indonesian) to write phrases and sentences in English. Hence those sentences and phrases were categorized as interlingual errors.

2. Intralingual & Developmental Errors

Intralingual and developmental error deals with target

language and comes from the difficulty of learning target language. Intralingual and developmental errors occur during the learning process of the second language at a stage when learners haven't really acquired the knowledge. In this research, intralingual and developmental errors influenced all the 225 subject-verb agreement errors found. In other words, the percentage of this possible cause of errors was 100 %. The errors were then divided into 4 sub-categories : overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete action of rules and false concept hypothesized. Here are the examples of intralingual and developmental errors :

1. “This happen because many TV programs.....” (Overgeneralization)
2. “I am afraid of something that will happens in the future” (Ignorance of Rules Restrictions)
3. “Since requirements to be a model teacher has been considered as one of teacher’s duty...” (Incomplete Applications of Rules)
4. “...so TV program is has many advantages and disadvantages for us...” (False Concept Hypothesized)

In the first example, student overgeneralized the rule of subject-verb agreement by omitting suffix -s after verb *happen*. In the second example, student ignored the restriction of subject-verb agreement where he/she added suffix -s after verb *happen* with modal auxiliary, which is not required. In the third example, student incompletely apply subject-verb agreement rules by using verb *-has* for subject in plural form. In this case, the student only committed error in this occasion and in certain

sentence structure. In the fourth sentence, students made wrong hypothesis about the use of verb -be by adding it in the sentence which uses modal auxiliary.

3. Combination of Interlingual and Intralingual & Developmental Errors

Apparently, it was found that there are 4 items of subject-verb agreement errors which were categorized as both interlingual and intralingual & developmental errors. They were phrases *"Divorce also can decrease by dating"*, *"Divorce can decrease by dating"*, *"Divorce can minimize..."* and *"Divorce can minimize..."* They were categorized as interlingual errors because they were meant to be in passive form, but the student wrote them in active form. The student used sentence structure from native language (Indonesian) to write phrases and sentences in English. On the other hand, they also can be categorized as interlingual and developmental errors, especially sub-category false concept hypothesized. It is because the students thought that active and passive form of sentence are the same.

c. Further Discussion

This research was aimed to find out kinds of subject-verb agreement errors made by 6th semester English Education students of Universitas Bengkulu, as well as the possible causes of errors. From the data analysis, it was found that there are 3 kinds of subject-verb agreement errors made by 6th semester English Education students. They were omission, addition and misinformation. There was no

misordering error detected in students' essays.

The research findings showed that many students still overgeneralized the rules of subject-verb agreement. It can be seen from the most dominant possible causes of errors and how the students committed the errors. They did not add suffix or change form of verb which indicated that they still applied their basic subject-verb agreement rules. Some of them already knew how to write the correct sentence but still lacked of knowledge about subject-verb agreement. This situation made them write incorrect sentences such as *There are so many TV program that can be watched, This program make their audience have more fantasy in their live and Indonesia have some TV programs.*

Some students also used or formed their own hypothesis about subject-verb agreement which caused them to committed errors. It was found that the students used incorrect grammatical rules in writing paragraphs. Some of them added unnecessary items or suffix such as verb -be before verb and before modal auxiliary, suffix -s, suffix -es and suffix -d before and after verb. The addition of those items formed incorrect sentences and broke the rules of subject-verb agreement and caused them to write incorrect sentences such as *However, some of TV programs nowadays are do not give any good education for children, That TV programs also has been influenced their mind and Consider the fact that Taliban shooting women and kids who wanted to go to school as Malala.*

It was also found that some students already knew subject-verb

agreement rules but they failed to apply them in certain occasions. In other words, they failed to completely apply subject-verb agreement rules. They committed errors but not as many as the others. The type of errors was mostly omission since they sometimes forgot to add such as suffix -s after subject and verb and they also forgot to change form of verb or verb -be. These resulted to incorrect sentences such as *Most of Indonesian movie are uneducated* and *Since requirements to be a model teacher has been considered as one of teacher's duty, there are so many teachers who have tried and given their best in order to fulfill it.*

In this research, omission errors occurred more than other types of errors. It was caused by intralingual and developmental errors, especially overgeneralization and incomplete application of rules. Overgeneralization and incomplete application of rules were two sub-types of intralingual and developmental errors which held the highest percentage of possible causes of errors. In overgeneralization and incomplete application of rules, students omitted suffix -s in subjects or verbs of sentences which led to omission errors. This type of errors was also induced by learning process as the students still developed their integrated skills by studying. This is in accordance with Dulay and Burt in Sompong (2014) who stated that interlingual errors were found in learning process of the second language at a stage when they have not really acquired the knowledge.

In contrary with omission errors, misordering errors were not found. It was because students only committed errors by adding or

omitting suffixes and using wrong form of verbs. No errors were caused by wrong order of subject and verb. However, this fact does not mean that misordering errors will not be found in other topics of grammar. Misordering errors are possible to be found in clauses or phrases.

In term of possible causes of errors, the researcher had found 2 possible causes of errors after analyzing students' writing. They were interlingual error and intralingual & developmental errors. Intralingual & developmental errors were the most dominant possible cause of errors with frequency 225 and percentage 98 %. This finding is in accordance with Dulay et al in Richards (1974) who stated that almost 90% of errors are identified as intralingual errors.

Interlingual and developmental errors were very dominant in this research. From data analysis in both students' writings and data calculation, the researcher concluded that many errors were induced by process of learning. Many students used their references of grammatical structure from many literary sources, but they failed to understand how to use them and formed their own hypothesis in many occasions. For example, students write *"...the TV programs are really collide to the culture"* This sentence shows us that there is addition of unused items in sentence which is word *are*. In here, student thought that verb *collide* must be written in passive form and that wrong hypothesis caused errors in subject-verb agreement. Another example can be seen in phrase *"I can say TV program increase our knowledge..."* In this phrase, the student apply normal form of verb without any change related to subject-

verb agreement. In other words, the student overgeneralized the rule of subject-verb agreement. The previous examples of incorrect sentences in previous paragraphs have shown us that intralingual & developmental errors really influenced students in committing subject-verb agreement errors.

Interlingual errors were rarely found in this research. This is because the errors found happened during the learning process of the second language at a stage when they have not really acquired the knowledge (Dulay and Burt in Sompong, 2014). The respondents were 6th semester students who has been trained for 3 years so that the interference of L1 was minimized. They have been introduced to subject-verb agreement but have not completely acquired the knowledge. Moreover, the instrument of this research was semi-guided writing test so that they have time to think before writing so that they could think of grammatical rules from L2 to be applied in their writings.

All the examples of errors above show us that the students have acquired at least basic subject-verb agreement rules but most of them lacked of comprehension of how to apply it. In this research, the only interlingual errors found were in sentence *Divorce can also decrease by dating* and *Divorce can minimize because couples already know their mates*. These examples show us that students could not write active sentence and use his/her background knowledge of native language to translate the sentences.

Research findings above can be found among students with lower semesters in universities and in previous studies. The researcher had

compared the findings of this research with previous studies from Wahyudi (2012), Mbau, Marhum and Muhsin (2014), and Karim, Fathema and Hakim (2015) as well as authentic writing product of students who are in early semesters. From the comparison, the researcher found that types of errors that occurred were relatively similar. The types of errors such as errors on -es ending and the use of there + be in previous study of Mbau, Marhum and Muhin (2014) were also found in this research. In Karim, Fathema and Hakim (2015), the types of errors found were agreement between verb and plural subject and agreement between verb and singular subject and agreement between verb and relative pronoun. Their findings also can be found in this research but in different categorization since this research used theory of Dulay et al (1985) to categorize errors

From comparison with authentic writing product of students in early semester, the researcher also found that the number of errors committed by students depends on the semester of the students. It means that students in early semester who have not understood all of subject-verb agreement rules will commit more errors than students in senior years. But this does not deny a fact that some senior years students still committed errors in large numbers.

Differences can be found between this research and previous studies. In Wahyudi (2012), the most dominant subject-verb agreement error was misinformation, followed by omission. On the contrary, this research shows that omission is the most dominant subject verb-agreement errors, followed by addition and misinformation. This

study categorized errors according to surface strategy taxonomy of errors by Dulay et al. This is different from Mbau, Marhum and Muhsin (2014) who categorized errors based on categories such as basic error in subject-verb agreement, error on -es ending, the use of expression of quantity the use of there + be and irregularities. Karim, Fathema and Hakim (2015) also categorized subject-verb agreement errors in different way where they categorized errors based on items in which errors were found, such as between verb and plural subject, between verb and singular verb and between verb and relative pronoun. In term of sample of the research, this research was conducted in sixth semester students. It was different from previous studies which were conducted in second semester students and tertiary level EFL learners.

In categorization of types of errors, this research showed new findings in sub-types of subject-verb agreement errors. Previous studies had shown us that types of subject-verb agreement errors found were basic error in subject-verb agreement, error on -es ending, the use of expression of quantity the use of there + be , irregularities, errors between verb and plural subject, verb and singular verb and between verb and relative pronoun. In this research, new sub-categories of subject-verb agreement were found. In general, the new sub-categories of errors were agreement between subject and modal auxiliary, agreement between verb and modal auxiliary, addition of unnecessary items before modal auxiliary, wrong form of sentence and wrong form of verb. The examples of the errors were addition of gerund

after verb, addition of verb -be before modal auxiliary, addition of suffix -s after verb with modal auxiliary, addition of modal auxiliary -been in active form of present perfect tense, wrong form of modal auxiliary -have in present perfect tense and wrong form of verb -have after modal auxiliary.

Based on research findings, the researcher argues that learning process plays important roles in learning grammar. It can improve students' grammar proficiency if it is done in right technique or cause misleading among students in learning grammar. Teachers or lecturers need to give extra attention and effort in teaching grammar. They have to know kinds or subject-verb agreement errors that are likely to occur and give more emphasis in the possibility of the errors.

Despite the fact that Communicative Language Teaching has been applied in English learning, grammar accuracy seems to be one of the main problems. Communicative Language Teaching is effective to give students chances of applying language in real life situation but it seems to downplay the role of grammar. Emphasis on grammar still needs to be applied though we have moved from grammar-centered learning to communicative learning. By integrating grammar into communicative activities, we can give our students improvement in their integrated skills, especially grammar.

The results of this research could be useful for teachers and learners in understanding subject-verb agreement errors as well as their possible causes. Teachers can improve students' knowledge about subject-verb agreement and locate the types of subject-verb agreement errors such

as omission, addition and misinformation as well as paying attention on dominant intralingual and developmental errors, such as incomplete applications of rules and overgeneralization. After knowing and understanding the types of subject-verb agreement errors and their possible causes, the teachers can provide better opportunity for students for practicing grammar and solving the errors. For learners, they have to be aware of the types and possible causes of subject-verb agreement errors mentioned before so that they can locate and identify the errors. Therefore, understanding the errors and their possible causes can help them in learning activities.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the research findings above, it can be concluded that almost all 6th semester English Education students of Universitas Bengkulu committed subject-verb agreement errors in their writings. The types of errors found were omission, addition and misinformation. Among these three types of errors, omission was the most dominant.

There are two possible causes of subject-verb agreement errors committed by the students. The first is interlingual error which comes from the influence of students' native language toward target language. The second is intralingual and developmental errors which are caused by learning process of target language. The most dominant possible causes of subject-verb agreement errors are intralingual and developmental errors. The most dominant causes of subject-verb agreement errors were intralingual and developmental errors with percentage 98 %. This finding is in accordance with Dulay et al in Richards (1974) who stated that

almost 90% of errors are identified as intralingual errors. In short, learning process influences students' understanding about subject-verb agreement.

Based on the results of the research, it is expected that lecturers and teachers who read this thesis become aware of the possibility of students' error in learning subject-verb agreement and can give more emphasis in the possibility of the errors as well as the kinds of errors that are likely to occur. Both teachers and learners can train subject-verb agreement and minimize subject-verb agreement errors by giving emphasis on dominant types or errors such as omission, addition and misinformation, as well as paying attention on dominant intralingual and developmental errors, such as incomplete applications of rules and overgeneralization.

For future researchers, this research can be used as reference for conducting research with the same topic. It is expected that they can develop the scope and variables of the research.

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