ERRORS IN WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT MADE BY THE SECOND GRADE STUDENTS OF SMP NEGERI 1 KARTASURA

Naskah Publikasi

Oleh:

<u>SEPTIANA</u>

A 320 080 156

SCHOOL OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION

MUHAMMADIYAH UNIVERSITY OF SURAKARTA

2011

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ABSTRACT

This article represents the result of Errors in Writing Descriptive Text Made by the Second Grade Students of SMP Negeri 1 Kartasura The subject of this research is the second grade students of SMPN 1 Kartasura in 2011/2012 academic year. The object of this research is the errors in descriptive text made by the students. The objectives of this research are (1) to describe the types of errors, (2) to find out the sources of errors. The writer uses descriptive research. The writer collects the data from the students writing activity, and document. The documents of this research are student's work sheets. The result of this research shows that are: (1) There are 4 levels errors; substance errors, grammar errors, lexical errors, and discourse errors, and classified into 18 errors that derived from 38 types of errors, and the dominant errors is grammar errors at 54,9% especially in bound morpheme –s/-es at 10, 6%, (2) There are 3 sources of errors; interlingual transfer, intralingual transfer, and context of learning. The implication for language teaching is that the teacher gives more attention to how teach grammar especially bound morpheme –s/-es to the students.

Keywords: *Error Analysis and Descriptive text*

1. Introduction

Why errors always exist in English language learning? Because of English as foreign language in Indonesia, it is possible that errors occur in English learning by foreign language learner. There are many causes in occurring of errors; difference of language between Indonesian and English is one of the causes. Indonesian and English have different structure or grammar

in sentence organization. When Indonesian sentence is changed into English, it occur structure alteration results. For example; *kaos putih* (Indonesian) is changed into *white T-shirt* (English), Indonesian phrase which change to English have occurred structure alteration. Such errors occur in writing skill; most of students argue that writing skill is the most difficult skill in English learning. Generally the students have difficulties organizing ideas in appropriate choice of vocabulary, sentence, and paragraph organization into a readable text. Errors cannot be separated from writing skill; they still exist when the students make composition in English, because English is not their native language in Indonesia. Based on the phenomena in writing English, the writer found many errors done by the students especially the eight year when they write descriptive composition. Actually it should be mastered by the students properly in the second grade because descriptive text use present tense in its language feature that in the first grade they have gotten this lesson, but in fact many students did some errors in writing descriptive text. From this phenomena the writer wants to know how far the errors made by the second grade students.

The problem statement of this research is "What errors that occur in descriptive texts made by the students of SMP Negeri 1 Kartasura". This study is limited to the erroneous on paragraph in 30 descriptive texts made by the students of SMP Negeri 1 Kartasura.. This study uses Error Analysis.

The objective of the study is to describe the types of errors in writing descriptive text made by the students and to know the dominant type of errors in writing descriptive text in order that the writer find out the sources of error in writing descriptive text and to describe the implication of error in language teaching.

There are some researchers who have conducted the study on error analysis that analyzed different objects. The first previous researcher is ROSELIND WEE (2009) with her research entitled "Sources of Errors: An Interplay of Interlingual Influence and Intralingual Factors" her study identifies and describes the written verb-form errors made by 50 Malaysian

Malay English as a Second Language (ESL) learners. She found errors of misformation were the highest error. By essay type, it was found the highest percentage of errors was in the narrative essay. For the tense category, the highest percentage of errors was in the past tense. The second previous researcher is RUSITA SAMA-AE (2008), in her research entitled " Error Analysis on Written Production of Junior High School Students of To'Bandar School Patani Thailand", she analyzed the errors on paragraph written by the students of To'Bandar School at Thailand. She conducted descriptive qualitative research in her research. The result of her research is that there are 73 items of errors which occur which analyzed based on the linguistic category, and the dominant errors are the ommision errors. She found the sources of errors they are interlingual transfer and over-generalization. The third previous researcher is RISA UMAMI (2008) with her research entitled "An Error Analysis on English Writing: A Case Study on The First year Students of MTsN Tanon Sragen in 2007/2008". She described some errors on English writing made by the first year students on MTsN Tanon sragen in 2007/2008. She used descriptive qualitative research to found out the description of error on English writing made by the students. The result of her research is that there are 27 type of error based on the linguistic category completed by surface strategy taxonomy, and the dominant type of error is omission. She found two dominant sources of errors they are interlingual transfer and intralingual transfer.

Based on the three previous studies above there are differences of this research with them, the writer will analyze the errors on descriptive text written by the second grade students. This research is done to extend the previous research in errors analysis research. Here the writer give attention the errors on the text especially in descriptive text written by the second grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Kartasura by using combination of linguistic category and surface taxonomy.

2. Research Method

This research uses a qualitative method. Bogdan and Taylor (1975: 5) in Moleong described qualitative methods as research procedure which produce words in writing or speaking from the people and the behavior that be analyzed as descriptive data (2004: 4). The researcher uses qualitative method to describe the types of errors, the dominant type of errors, sources of errors, and the implication of errors in language teaching.

The data in this research are the erroneous on paragraph in 30 descriptive texts made by the students, and the data sources are taken from 30 student's descriptive text written of the second grade SMP Negeri 1 Kartasura. The data collection taken from the test which have given to the students to know the types of error that student's made in writing descriptive text. The writer gives test to the second grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Kartasura class VIII A. The writer asked them to write a descriptive text with their own words. First, the writer gives five topics that the students could choose one of the topics to start their writing. The writer gives 40 minutes to finish their work. After that the writer collects the student's work sheet and take it as documentation, here the writer will classify the types of errors that made by the students.

The technique of analyzing data through four steps; the first step is collection of sample of learner language. A specific sample consists of one sample language use collected from a limited number of learners (Ellis, 1994: 49). The second step is identification of errors. After the sample of the learner language has been collected, the errors have to be identified to decide what errors constitutes and to recognize the errors. The third step is description of errors, and the last step is explanation of errors that concern with the sources of errors.

3. Findings and Discussion

In this research, the researcher analyzes the types of errors made by the students by using linguistic category and surface strategy taxonomy. She found the types of error that occur in the data are; (a) Substance errors that it consists of spelling errors, and punctuation errors, (b) Lexical errors consist of wrong diction, addition of unnecessary word, (c) Grammar errors consist of BE (addition, omission, misformation), bound morpheme –s/-es (addition, omission), pronoun (omission, misformation), article (addition, omission, misformation), preposition (addition, misformation, omission), grammar structure (misordering), verb (misformation, omission), adjective (misformation), auxiliary (misformation), adverb (omission), conjunction (omission), (d) Discourse errors consist of coherence error and cohesion error.

a. Substance Errors

According to James, the substance level consists of spelling error and punctuation error (1998: 268). In this level, the writer found misspelling, paragraph indenting, and capitalization errors. The students produce simple sentences, but they have less knowledge on writing composition rule.

1) Spelling Error

Spelling error or misspelling is the misselection of a grapheme to represent a syllable or morpheme in forming part of a word (James, 1998: 133). The writer found misencoding on the text written by the students. According to James, misencoding is an error when the learner access target language phonographic or sound to symbol rules to represent the pronounciation of each phoneme. For example;" I ***wont*** to tell you about my mother". In this case, the student was using a letter to represent a sound which identical to the sound of the name of that letter; *wont* that /o/ for the vowel of /a/ in the word *want*, and the other example is *cildren* for *children* that the pronunciation is [cildren].

2) Punctuation

Punctuation is special marks that add in writing to separate phrases and sentences, to show that something is a question, and the orther rule in puntuation such as capitalization, italic letter, paragraph indenting, etc (James, 1998:131).

(a) Miscapitalization

Appropriate capitalization is the basic rule in written. The common rule of capitalization are capitalizing the first word of a sentence, the pronoun I, and the first letter in the first word of name of specific person, place, and things. In this case the student still makes some errors in capitalization called miscapitalization. The students do misuse in capital letter. Such on the example *"there is a cupboard in my bed, television, fan, computer, stuffed lion, scarves and much more. "* the student does not use capital letter in the first letter of word on. In this condition, the students do not pay attention on capitalization; they do not understand on how the using of capital letters.

(b) Paragraph Indenting

Paragraph is the organization of sentences. Occasionally, a paragraph may be as short as one sentence. The first line of each new paragraph is indented from the left-hand margin (Roberts, 1985: 127). In this case, many students produce a paragraph which there is no indenting on the first line of paragraph. For example;

*I have a bedroom, My bedroom in left side of living room. My bedroom big and clean. *I have a bed, cupboard, table, chair, door and window. I have one bed, two cupboard, two table, one chair, two.*

On the case above, the students do not understand on the rule of good paragraph writing.

b. Lexical Errors

In lexical items, vocabulary is very important in language learning, because by some vocabulary the message can be represented. Lexical errors

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show that the students have less proficiency in vocabulary preference. In lexical level, the writer found diction errors; wrong diction and addition of unnecessary word, and wrong numbering.

1) Wrong Diction

In this case, the students choose a word that does not mean what they mean or choose a word or phrase that is inappropriate to the composition. The students have less ability in choosing appropriate vocabulary. For example; "On my *home page* there are some ornamental plants". The choosing of vocabulary is still influenced by their mother tongue. The student translates the target language by their first language structure.

2) Addition of unnecessary word

In this case, the student adds a word or phrase that is inappropriate to the sentence or the composition. For example; "Her *colour* skin is brown". He considers that by adding a word on their sentence will make it understandable but in fact it makes the sentence in unwell form.

3) Wrong numbering

In this case, the student used the cardinal number to describe grade which it should use ordinal number. For example; "*In the moment* he is *a 9* grade" that it should be **9th**. In this case, the students only know that numbering function on English is same. Just like on Indonesian, that the function of numbering are same; the students consider that the function of numbering between English and Indonesian are same.

c. Grammar Errors

Grammar errors are errors in ignorance or misapplication of grammatical rules. In this research, the writer found some errors of bound morpheme –s/es, BE, verb, pronoun, preposition, article, auxiliary, adverb, and conjunction. In this case, the students have not fully mastered English grammar rule yet. For example error in grammar structure; "She *very much like playing badminton*" it should be **"She likes playing badminton very much".** In this case, the student has misplaced between predicate and adverb which it should be the predicate follows the subject.

d. Discourse

A discourse is a sequence of connected sentences or utterances (the form) which a sender communicates a message to a receiver (the function) (Renkema, 1993:32). In this case, the student has problem to express their message in appropriate arrangement. For example in this descriptive text;

1) Coherence

Coherence means that the sentences are logically connected in a paragraph. A text should open its information; new information should be opened in the context of what is already familiar.

In this case, the student arranged the sentences into ineffective order, he does not give new information about his written but he repeats the same information, for example; "*I have a bed, cupboard, table, chair, door and window. I have one bed, two cupboard, two table, one chair, two door and one window*" (line 2 and line 3). In his description (line 2-5) "*I have a bed, cupboard, table, chair, door and window. I have one bed, two cupboard, two table, one chair, two door and one window. Bed in South, cupboard in West, table in Easth, chair in West, door in Easth and north, window in West.*", he is not providing review or describing of his bedroom, while in descriptive text consists of identification on the first sentence as introducing what will be told, and the next is description which all the sentences try to describe a thing that has already introduced on identification.

2) Cohesion

Cohesion refers to the connection which exists between elements in the text. Halliday and Hassan (1976) in Renkema (1993: 37) identified five types of cohesion of text structure; reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, lexical cohesion. In this case, the writer found that the text occur errors in cohesion marking;

(a) Substitution

Substitution is the replacement of a word (group) or sentence segment by a dummy word. One of cases for example, the student does not use

substitution marker to replace a certain word; he repeated "*My bedroom*" on the first line till twice, whereas the words can be replaced by pronoun "*it*".

This study explains that errors in writing descriptive text still produced by the second grade students of SMPN 1 Kartasura. The errors were identified and categorized according to levels of errors and types of errors. By levels of errors (table 3.1) , it was found that the highest percentage of errors was found in grammar errors at 54.9%, lexical errors at 17.7%, substance errors at 17.2%, and discourse errors at 10.2%. From categories of errors (table 3.3), the highest percentage of errors was found in errors of bound morpheme at 10.6%, misspelling at 9.3%, errors of BE at 9.3%, errors of pronoun at 9.3%, then followed by errors of wrong diction at 8.8%, errors of addition unnecessary word at 8%, errors of article at 6.6%, errors of preposition at 5.8%, errors of grammar structure at 5.3%, errors of paragraph indenting at 4.4%, coherence at 5.3%, errors of cohesion at 4.9%, errors of errors of verb at 3.5%, errors of miscapitalization at 3.5%, errors of adjective at 1.8%, errors of auxiliary at 1.3%, errors of adverb at 0.9%, and errors of conjunction at 0.5%. By errors type (table 3.2) were found errors of omission, misformation, addition and misordering. Errors of omission are the highest errors at 51.6%, misformation at 25.8%, addition at 12.9%, and misordering at 9,7%.
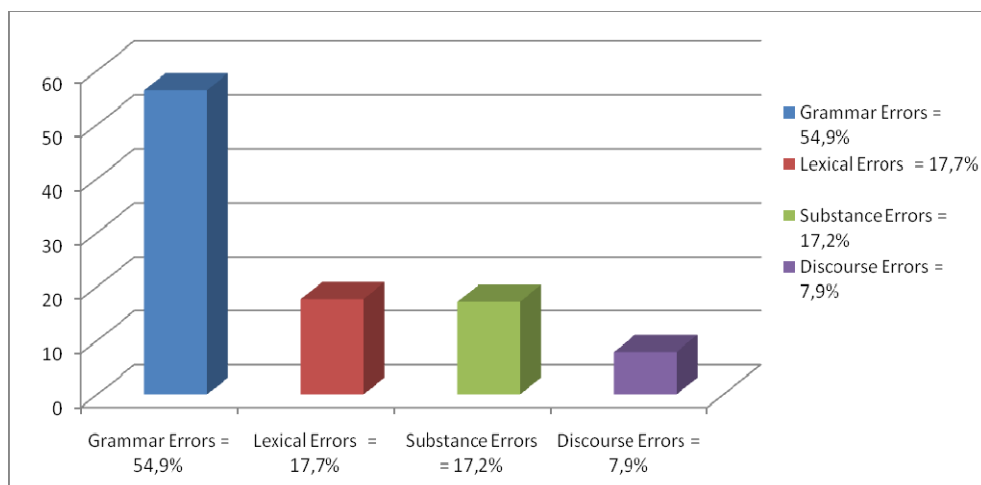
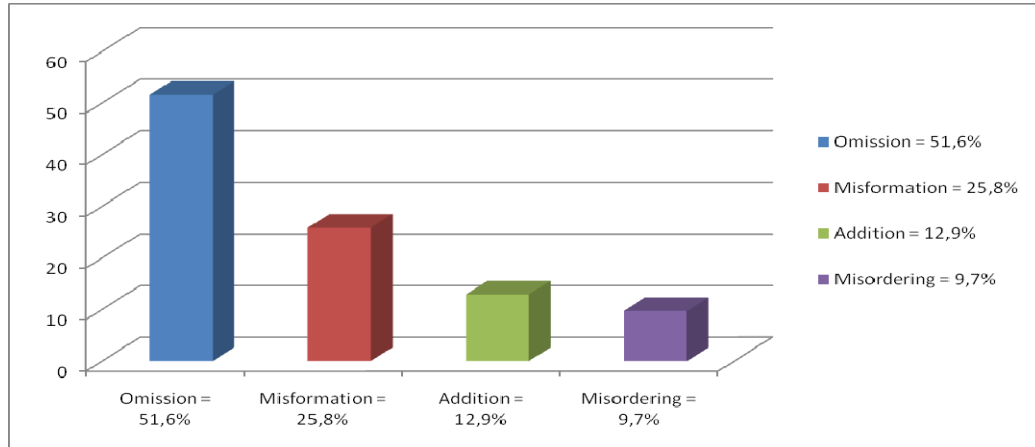Table 3.1 Levels of Errors
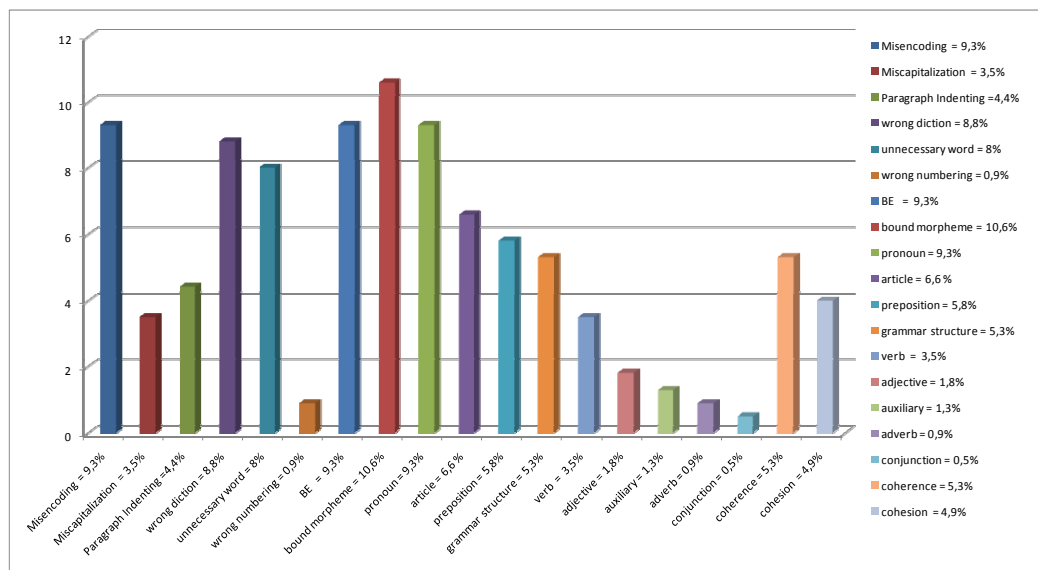
Table 3.2 Types of Errors

Table 3.3 Categories of Errors

From the data percentage above, it can be seen that among the types of errors, the dominant errors by levels of errors are grammar errors at 54.9% or 124 errors. From categories of errors, the highest percentage of errors was found in errors of bound morpheme at 10.6% or 24 errors. By errors types were found errors of omission are the highest errors at 51.6%. It means that the

students still have difficulties in this area, especially in bound morpheme area because it has the highest number of errors in grammar categories. In this case, some students do not aware that they have made some errors on their text written.

In this research, the writer found three sources of errors; interlingual transfer where the students still influenced by their mother tongue in tranfering the language, intralingual transfer where the students have not mastered the foreign language rule successfully yet, and context learning where the students used some wrong patterns that was memorized in drilling by the teacher.

The students made interlingual errors, because the target language that they produce still influence by their mother tongue. For examples; "*On my home page there are some ornamental plants.*" which translated from Indonesian sentence: "*Di halaman ku terdapat beberapa tanaman hias.*" The second sentence "*She very much like playing badminton.*" This incorrect sentence is misordering. The student put adverb "very much" between subject and verb. In Indonesian structure, it is correct but in English it is wrong; the sentence translated from Indonesian "*Dia sangat suka bermain batminton.*" the adverb "very much" should be put after verb that followed by object. The sentence should be "*She likes playing badminton very much.*"

Intralingual transfer is not influenced by mother tongue, but reflects the general characteristics of rule learning; such misanalysis where the students has misshypothesized, overgeneralization is the overindulgence of one member of a set of forms and the underuse of others in the set, like using *that* to the exclusion of *who* (James, 1988: 187)*,* and incomplete rule application, this strategy is aimed at simplification rather than attempt to get whole of the structure right at one, the learner have decomposed it into smaller operation (James, 1998: 186). For example; "*I am buy the glasses in optic*". In this case, the student used pattern that was memorized in drilling was not proper. Probably the student got wrong explanation from the teacher when she was still at elementary level. In her memories, "saya" in Indonesian is "I am" in English, whereas 'saya' is **I** in English.

Different with the other researchers that do an error analysis, in this research was found grammar errors were the highest level errors at 54.9% and the highest errors category is bound of morpheme –s/-es errors at 10.6%, and by the type of error, it was found the highest error of omission at 51.6%. The first previous, ROSELIND WEE (2009) entitled "Sources of Errors: An Interplay of Interlingual Influence and Intralingual Factors" has identified and categorized the errors by surface taxonomy. Errors of misformation were the highest errors at 63.4%. By essay type, it was found the highest percentage of errors was in the narrative essay at 40.3%. For the tense category, the highest percentage of errors was in the past tense at 37.6%. These research findings also different with the second previous researcher, Rusita Sama-AE (2008), in her research entitled "Error Analysis on Written Production of Junior High School Students of To'Bandar School Patani Thailand", and the third researcher, RISA UMAMI (2008) entitled "An Error Analysis on English Writing: A Case Study on The First year Students of MTsN Tanon Sragen in 2007/2008". In their research was found omission as the dominant error. The sources of errors that were found in this research are different with the previous researchers, they are interlingual transfer and intralingual transfer, whereas this research found three sources of errors; they are interlingual transfer, intralingual transfer, and context of learning.

Based on the theory of James that there are three levels and two sublevels of errors (substance, text; lexical and grammar, and discourse errors) in linguistic category, five categories of errors by surface strategy (omission, addition, misformation, misordering, and blends), and 60 types of errors. The writer found four levels by linguistic category, they are 17.2% substance errors, 54.9% grammar errors and 17.7 lexical errors in text errors, and the last is discourse errors at 10.2%. This study just found four categories of errors by surface strategy; they are omission, addition, misformation and misordering, and 38 types of errors. According to Brown's theory, there are four sources of errors; they are interlingual transfer, intralingual transfer, context learning, and communication strategies. In this research, the writer just found three sources

of errors; interlingual transfer where the students still influenced by their mother tongue in tranfering the language, intralingual transfer where the students have not mastered the foreign language rule successfully yet, and context learning where the students used some wrong patterns that was memorized in drilling by the teacher.

4. Conclusion and the Implication for Language Teaching

Based on the errors analysis of descriptive text made by the second grade students of SMP N 1 Kartasura in the previous chapter, the writer can conclude that they still make some errors in their descriptive texts.

a. Types of Error

There are four types of errors by levels of language in descriptive text made by the students that found in this research, as follows from the dominant errors;

1) Grammar errors at 124 errors or 54.9% consists of; 24 errors of bound morpheme –s/-es which the highest percentage error, 21 errors of BE, 21 errors of pronoun, 15 errors of article, 13 errors of preposition, 12 errors of grammar structure, 8 errors of verb, 4 errors of adjective, 3 errors of auxiliary, 2 errors of adverb, and 1 error of conjunction.

2) Lexical errors at 40 errors or 17.7% which consist of; 20 wrong diction, 18 addition of unnecessary words, and 2 wrong numbering.

3) Substance error at 39 errors or 17.2%, which consist of 21 misspelling, 8 miscapitalization, and 10 paragraph indenting.

4) Discourse errors at 23 errors or 10.2% which consist of 12 errors of coherence and 11 errors of cohesion.

The students have common difficulties in grammar area, it can be seen by the highest number of errors at 54.9% or 124 errors from 226 amounts of all errors.

b. Sources of Error

In this research was found some sources of errors as follows:

1) Interlingual transfer where the students still influenced by their mother tongue in tranfering the language,

2) Intralingual transfer where the students have not mastered the foreign language rule successfully yet,

3) Context learning where the students used some wrong patterns that was memorized in drilling by the teacher.

The students still have difficulties in grammar area especially in bound morpheme –s/-es. Here, found omission and addition in bound of morpheme –s/-es that done by the students, such as; addition of –s in adjective and omission –s/-es in regular plural, possessive, and third person singular present tense. In this case, some students do not aware that they have made some errors on their text written. They are sure that they write in correct structure, but in fact they make some errors. They cannot use the words correctly when they try to transfer their ideas into English. There are some possible causes that make them still do errors; the students have limited knowledge about grammar rule and vocabulary or they still rivet on old pattern drilling in past learning.

The result of this study gives implication for the language teaching. Seen by the dominant errors finding, the teacher gives more attention to how teach bound morpheme –s/-es to the students in order that they use the words correctly. Here, omission is found in bound of morpheme –s/-es that done by the students, such as; omission –s/-es in regular plural, possessive, and third person singular present tense. When teaching vocabulary, it is more effective if add with teaching the other information that will help the students master the words function and use them correctly. Such as teaching plural noun, it is better to introduce the regular plural and irregular plural at first and then the rule of suffixes on regular plural. In teaching possessive pronoun, the students are introduced all the pronouns at first, and then emphasis on possessive pronoun and apply the possessive pronoun with the regular plural in noun phrase, for example; *Andi's cats*. This compounding will make the students

dill in using the word correctly that suitable with the word function. In teaching present tense, teacher should give the students knowledge about the function of the tense itself, and how to make positive, negative, and interrogative sentence in present tense. In positive form, the students must be given the information about the rule of suffixing on the end of verbs. To encourage the students to use affixes and word formation process which have been introduced to them, the teacher can use contextualized

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