FIRST LANGUAGE TRANSFER FOUND IN THE STUDENTS' RECOUNT TEXT: A STUDY OF INDONESIAN LEARNERS LEARNING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE.

MANUSCRIPT PUBLICATION

Submitted to

Postgraduate Program of Language Study of Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta as a Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Getting Magister Degree of Language Study of English



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APPROVAL

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Abstract

SITI ROHIMAH, S 200100023: "First Language Transfer Found in The Students' recount Text: A Study of Indonesian Learners learning English as a foreign Language". Thesis: Postgraduate Program of Language Study Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta

This research is aimed at clarifying the types of language transfer, clarifying frequencies or dominants of language transfer and describing the sources of language transfer. In this study the writer uses Descriptive qualitative. The research was carried out at MTs N 1 Surakarta by taking 75 students from the grade two. The method of collecting data of this research is a test. The result of the research shows that students make errors in language transfer. The first language transfer in the students' recount text occurs on lexical level and syntactical level. Article is the highest level in lexical transfer; it reaches 15.78% with 18 mistakes and the lowest percentage is cognate. The highest grade of syntactical level is placed by word order; it reaches 81.25% with 13 errors and then the lowest is negation, it is only 1 error and reached percentage of 6.15%. The sources of the students' language transfer done by the students of MTs N 1 Surakarta are categorized into Selection Process, Interlanguage Identification, Blend and Autonomous Material, Structural Model, and Creating Equivalence. Some pedagogical implications concern to the teachers that have role as an agent of change in the education are Introducing of Contrastive Thinking Patterns in Class, Applying of suitable Learning Methodology in class, Introducing of Syntactical Transfer in Class, Introducing of Lexical Transfer in Class, and Classroom Management

Key words: first language, language transfer, Indonesian learners.

INTRODUCTION

In learning foreign language, it cannot be separated with the term Second Language Acquisition (SLA). According to Nunan (1999:1), SLA refers to "the ways in which any learner, child or adult learns a second or foreign language".

The term second in SLA, based on this definition seems transparent. In this context 'second' can refer to any language that is learned subsequent to the mother tongue or native language. The word second in this term intended to contras with foreign. This is in accord with Ellis' statement which says that second language acquisition is "the way in which people learn a language other than their mother tongue, inside or outside of a classroom; and second language acquisition is the study of this" (Ellis, 2006:3).

When learning a foreign language, there are some factors that influence its mastering. The first problem is there is contrastive analysis between mother tongue (native language) and second language including English language. The second problem is how the students learn a foreign language. The last is fact of mother tongue interference; the student problems are caused by the interference of mother tongue.

Some errors are due to (conscious or unconscious) transfer from another language. Cross-linguistic influence can in some cases be unfavorable, resulting in negative transfer, and in other cases facilitative, i.e. transfer will result in the correct form being produced in the target language. Transfer from native languages has been well documented (Odlin: 1989 for an overview). However in some circumstances transfer may arise as a result of reference to other foreign languages known by a student. This non-native transfer has in general received much less attention from researchers. Transfer was in some cases a result of conscious attempts to facilitate acquisition through comparison with these other languages, and sometimes occurred without deliberate contemplation. The writer

concludes that on occasions transfer may be more likely to occur from another foreign language than from the learner's native tongue. Odlin (1989:27) offers the following working definition: "Transfer is the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired."

In foreign language learning, the students are supposed mastering the language skill, either communicative competence in spoken or written competence in English texts. When mastering written one, the students will communicate with kinds of genre-based writing such as description, procedure, recount, narrative and report. The writing skill mastery will help the students producing articles and composition.

Likewise, throughout her research, the writer has also observed that such interference is actually perceived in writing skills, obstructing the acquisition of the foreign language. In her research, the researcher also found evident lack of writing skills especially in Recount text, that most of the students from whom we obtained our sample have, since they were not able to produce adequate writing assignments even in their mother tongue. For example, the student has an Indonesian sentence like "Saya mempunyai pengalaman menarik di waktu lampau". For transferring this Indonesian sentence into English, the student writes: "I have an interesting experience in time ago". The writer can also give another example like: "Saya membagi mangga itu menjadi 2. For this sentence, the students will transfer into English; "I divide that mango become two".

Based on the focus of the research, the writer raises some problem statements namely the types, the frequencies or dominants, and the sources of language transfer are found in the students' recount text at the second grade of MTs Negeri 1 Surakarta. The objectives of the study are to clarify types and frequencies or dominants and to describe sources of language transfer.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research is carried out at the second grade students of MTs N 1 Surakarta in academic year of 2011/2012. As the objects of this research are language transfers that are gathered from the sentences are produced by the students. As sources of data are recount texts which theme is "Unforgettable experience".

For the method of data collection, the researcher uses a test. The documents analysis is done to know the documents related the student's works of first language transfer. The researcher asks the students to compose a recount text based on their experiences. They are supposed to choose the interesting one. From the students' works, the researcher collects them as data that included the erroneous sentences made by the students. Then from the data, the researcher identifies and classifies them based on the types of the first language transfer using error analysis. The data in this research, the writer uses descriptive qualitative.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.

Concerning with the types of language transfer made by the students, the writer classifies them into two; they are transfer of lexical level and transfer of syntactical level.

1. Transfer of Lexical Level

Transfer of lexical level is classified into two, namely; False Friend and Code Switching.

a. False Friend

False Friend is pairs of words in two languages and also letters in two alphabets that look or sound similar, but different in meaning. Concerning False Friend there are seven points, those are Pronoun, Article, Adjectives, To be, Verb, Diction, and Prepositions.

1) Pronoun

As in the data, the students use the wrong pronoun of "our", as the following examples: "Our swim in the swimming pool". The students misunderstand the use of possessive pronoun and the function of possessive pronoun. In their sentences they use them as a subject. The students utilize the rules of *Bahasa Indonesia in their* English sentences.

2) Article

The students make errors on the wrong choice article. For instance in reference to the use of definite article "the", some students write wrong sentences as in the following cases: "...and I went to the Depok Beach".

3) Adjectives

The following analysis show evidences that students transfer their habit in native language into English. They use Indonesian Grammatical pattern in their sentences. They transfer adjective of their sentences in word order, for example "On the way we looked *view beautiful.*"

The students do not know and are not able to use adjective properly and they do the wrong choice of adjective, like shown the data "The birth was very *delicious*.". In this case the students do not know that the word "delicious" can only be applied for food. They take turn that the word "delicious" can also be applied to another word. "delicious" should be changed by "fine", or "fun" or "happy"

Furthermore the writer finds examples with participial adjectives ending in **-ing** and **-ed**. To analyze this topic, she writes down an example in which students produce adjective ending errors and consequently native language interference in the grammar structure of the foreign language. In *Bahasa Indonesia* a student write "*Saya merasa tertarik*", but in English they write "I fell *interesting*,". Rather this sentence should have been written this way: "I fell *interested*,".

Relating to the data "Finally, my family and I to home with safe" shows that the learners are confuse in using adjective and adverb. They transfer phrase "dengan selamat" into "with safe". They think the phrase is correct in English because the transfer word by word;

"dengan" in English is "with" and "selamat" in English is "safe". In English "dengan selamat" is adverb (safely), so they should write for the sentence "Akhirnya keluarga saya dan saya pulang dengan selamat" into "Finally, my family and I to home with safely"

4) To be

In this case the students are confused of using "be" after subject. They often omit the copula in their early speech, as an example "We very happy because, we already not calm". The students should have been written this way: "We are very happy because, we already not calm".

5) Verb

In this study the writer invents mistakes on such verbs as Wrong Use, Double Verb, and Omission. Based on the data shows that the learners do not understand the usage of verb, as shown the sentence "Saya dan teman saya pergi wisata dengan guru saya naik bis". They transfer the sentence into "I and my friend to leave jaunt my teacher, climb bus." In this case the learners are influenced by Bahasa Indonesia, that "naik" is transferred into "climb". In English it is right but wrong in usage. The learners should transfer the sentence "I and my friend to leave jaunt my teacher, by bus."

Another student's transfer of verb is double verb. In this case the learners are influenced by *Bahasa Indonesia*, because they apply two verbs in one sentence sequent. For example, "The sun **begin sink**." In

Bahasa Indonsia, placing two verbs in one sentence sequent is not a problem, like "Matahari mulai terbenam". In English it is wrong grammatically, we must insert "to" between the verbs, or forming "Ving" on the second verb. So for the sentence "The sun begin sink" is wrong, the students should write the sentence "The sun begin to sink" or "The sun begin sinking".

Concerning the verb, other mistakes done by the students is omission the verb. There are some words in *Bahasa Indonesia* that have function as verb like "*makan (siang)*", "*mandi*", "*sholat*", etc. but in this case the learners transfer these words "lunch", "bath", "pray", example "Next my family and I bath and maghrib pray"

6) Spelling

Another mistake that the writer finds the students do many mistakes in spelling. Spelling is the writing of word or words with the necessary letters and diacritics present in an accepted standard order. The data shows that the learners ignore the rule of spelling. They should write *campion* instead of champion, *leon* instead of lion, *jewer* instead of **jewel**, *templat* instead of *temple*, *chiken* instead of *chicken*, *sammer* instead of *summer*, *wett* instead of wet, and *pounch* instead of pond or dam.

7) Preposition

In this indicator the tendency of interference between *Bahasa Indonesia* and English continues. Analyzing the sentence "First, we set

the birth cake **in out** Aziza's home" of the data above, the writer could say that the tendency in *Bahasa Indonesia* to use less prepositions than in English language is transferred from one language to another. In *Bahasa Indonesia* we use the preposition "**di**" in most of the cases and circumstances when referring to a specific location, "*Pertama, kami menata kue ulang tahun di luar rumah Aziza*". In English, the use of prepositions is much more varied because, according to the context, we have to use a specific one. They should be written in English "we set the birth cake *out of* Aziza's home"

b. Code Switching

Code Switching is one type of language mixing. Switching is superficially similar to the language mixing of young bilinguals, since words, phrases, and sentences of two (or more) language may appear in juxtaposition (Odlin, 1989;139). And Dulay at all stated that it is an active, creative process of incorporating material from both of a bilingual's language into communicative act (1989;114). In this case there are two kinds of Code Switching, namely; cognates and invented word.

1) Cognates

Later, the writer would mention that the students' mistake in their language transfer is cognates. Cognates are words which roots generally look similar between each other while others look the same either in *Bahasa Indonesia* or English, and their meaning is identical. (Odlin,

1989). Just to exemplify, we will mention few examples to show our assumption:

Bahasa Indonesia	English
• Sofenir	Souvenir
• Ide	Idea
 Taksi 	Taxi
 Tiket 	Ticket
Voly	Volley.

In this case the frequent use of false cognates could create on students' bad habit of writing words is in wrong spelling. Therefore, this negative transfer or interference emerges because learners sometimes assume that words are written in similar way have similar spelling in the foreign language, like the sentence "Next my family bought sofenir."

2) Invented Word

Most the students utilize this strategy when they feel that their English lexicon is not good enough to express their ideas; as a result, they express the utterance or words in Bahasa Indonesia to their own thoughts. The students transfer Bahasa Indonesia to English context directly as the sentence "Next, we leave to Candi Sukuh". The word "candi" has own meaning in English, is "temple". Here the students should write the sentence "Next, we leave to Sukuh temple".

Thus, to illustrate the case, the writer shows several examples of invented words found in the sample she takes at MTsN 1 Surakarta:

•	bakso	instead of	meatballs
•	krupuk	instead of	crispy
•	menara pandang	instead of	sight tower
•	silaturahmi	instead of	attending

• *Masjid Agung* instead of the great mosque

wader instead of little fish tanggul instead of bridge

• *Kloter* instead of flight group

2. Transfer of Syntactical Level

In reference to this issue, the writer could say that there are certain specific cases in transfer of syntactical level example, Word order, Negation, and Agreement

a. Word Order

Continuing the researcher's analysis, she can observe one of the most common errors that *Bahasa Indonesia* interference produces in English writings: word order. In the case, the problem of Adjective is evident; that is, students always have a tendency to transfer the position of words in *Bahasa Indonesia* into English producing the errors that the writer describes before. For instance the students write as "....di sungai dan baju saya basah semua". The students write the sentence into "....in river and my clothes wett all.", it should be written "...in river and all my clothes wett".

Other mistakes are done by the students in word order is **Noun Phrase**, as shown the data "*Pertama*, *semua murid bersama di halaman sekolah*". In *Bahasa Indonesia* the process is reversed. The learners generally set the adjective after the noun, but it is not relevant in English if they wrote "First, all student together in *yard school*". Therefore, the

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accurate sentence should have been written this way: "First, all student together in *school yard*".

Next, the evident of transferring is **auxiliaries**, that is, students always have a tendency to transfer the position of words in *Bahasa Indonesia* into English. For instance the students write as "*Saya merasa sedih karena tidak dapat melihat smash*" however, in English the negative word NOT must always be used after a modal auxiliary verb. Therefore, the sentence should have been written this way, "I feel sad because *can not* looking Smash.", but not "I feel sad because *not can looking* Smash".

Similarly it happens like the data "Apakah kamu dapat membuat donut?" where they transfer the same Bahasa Indonesia grammatical structures into the sentences of the target language. Here the learners do not understand the rule using auxiliary in interrogative sentence which it must be placed in the beginning of each sentence. So they transfer the sentence into "you can make a donut?". In this case, the students should write in right way "can you make a donut?"

Concerning the type of the students language transfer in word order, the writer finds the students' mistake in **Demonstrative Pronoun.**The students are interfered by *Bahasa Indonesia*. In *Bahasa Indonesia* demonstrative pronoun is placed after noun, unlike in English where is placed in the beginning of the sentence. So the students transfer the sentence "*Liburan itu membuat saya bahagia*" into "*Vacation that*"

make me very happy". Therefore, the accurate sentence should have been written this way: "*That vacation* make me very happy".

Moreover, the learners work with certain structures in their native language they tend to map such structures into those of the foreign language. They assume that they are similar and as a consequence they produce negative transfer or language interference since structures of both languages are not the same, it is about adverbial of place.

Thus, analyzing the example of the data "My friends and I there studied astronomies", the writer notices that students apply rules of Bahasa Indonesia to write in English because they translate the sentence from Bahasa Indonesia this way: "Teman saya dan saya disana belajar astronomi". These sentences are correct in Bahasa Indonesia. Nevertheless, the students, based on this structure, assumed what they write in English as valid, but the writer already knows that the pertinent rule in English for frequency adverbial of place "there" usage states that they must be always written in the beginning of the sentence, that is: "There My friends and I studied astronomies".

b. Negation

The source of error that called the students' interference is Double Negation. From the examples of the sentence seem that they unconsciously use double constituents for negation in the same sentence. That is, they assume they are accurate negative sentences since in

Bahasa Indonesia they produce utterances with similar structure. For instance as the following sentence:

Indonesian pengalaman itu tidak dapat dilupakan

English It exercise don't unforgettable,

The data above means that they are mapping structures and bad habits from the first language into those structures of the second language they are learning causing interference errors. Here, the students should write the sentence "this experience is unforgettable".

c. Agreement

The next indicator the writer analyzes from the learners' interference is agreement. The writer can infer that the student literally transfer from *Bahasa Indonesia* into English what the students want to express; that is, "mother *shake* hand with my grandmother", since in *Bahasa Indonesia* structures does not add the marker "s" to the third persons as English does. Besides, it is relevant to mention that she finds this sort of interference when learners have used in their writings the singular third person to elaborate their sentences because this error is not present in other verb forms.

Likewise, in the following examples she has also found the same kind of transfer error, "My mother say:"It is a delicious donuts Rey!". This structure is incredibly difficult for *Bahasa Indonesia* speakers since as we can see, the conjugations in both languages are not similar at all. Therefore, most of the time students just tend to write the

verb without the –s ending. For these sentences the students should write "mother *shakes* hand with my grandmother" and "My mother say:"It is a delicious donuts Rey!"."

CONCLUSION

Based on the analyses of language transfer written by the second year students of MTs N 1 Surakarta, There were 110 sentences in lexical level and 16 sentences in syntactical level.

Concerning the types of language transfer, **article** was the highest level in lexical transfer; it reaches 16.36% with 18 mistakes. The students made errors on misusage and omission of article. They ignored to apply an article in their writing. These occurred because the students still developed their knowledge of English rule system which an article is very important because it is grammatical requirement. The data also showed that the students added unnecessary article to noun phrase and made wrong choice of article. The omission in article is also done by the students.

The second grade of language transfer types is using **preposition**, it reaches 14,54% with the number of 16 sentences. The students are confused in using prepositions **in**, **at** and **on** that are used to denote time; especially these have specific rules governing their usage. When using these three as prepositions of location, there are certain rules that they need to follow. **Verbs** also places the second grade like preposition, they are 14,54% with 16 sentences of mistakes. The students were confused when they produced

sentences with participial adjectives, which obviously originated an interference error into structures of the foreign language. Wrong Use, Double Verb, and Omission are general mistakes done by the learner in using verbs. Then the third grade is **Adjectives**, they 12.72% (14 sentences).

Next, the using **To be**, its percentage is 9,64%, it shows that the students are confused of using **be** after subject. They were influenced by *Bahasa Indonesia*, so they often omit the copula in their text. For using **pronoun** that reaches 8,77%, here the students misunderstood the use of possessive adjective and the function of possessive adjective. They regarded it as a subject. The students also utilize between the rules of *Bahasa Indonesia* and English.

Concerning **spelling**, there are 8 mistakes or 7, 72%. The students do many mistakes in spelling and they ignored the rule of spelling, for instance *campion*, *jewer*, *chiken*, etc. For **Invented word** reaches high enough is 12.72% with 14 mistakes. The students get difficulties in translating the utterance into English, so they still use the utterance in native language. And the lowest lexical level placed by **Cognates**, was 3.63% with number of errors only 4 mistakes, the learners sometimes assume that words written in similar way have similar spelling in the foreign language.

Relating the types of language transfer in syntactical level, the highest grade placed by **word order**, it reaches 81.25% with 13 errors. And then the second grade is **agreement**, **it is** 12.5% with 2 errors. **Negation** is only 1 error and reaches percentage of 6.15%.

The sources of the students' language transfer done by the students of MTs N 1 Surakarta are categorized into Selection Process, Interlanguage Identification, Blend and Autonomous Material, Structural Model, and Creating Equivalence.

However, learners who have studied the language for a longer time as well as in an environment in which their second language is being learnt is the mother tongue. It has a better command of that second language and therefore makes so many mistakes due to negative language transfer. Unless the students realize that they make mistakes because of the influence of their own language. They will keep coming to their mother tongue whenever they do not know the grammatical rule or word of the second language they are trying to think of. Despite all the difficulties the first thing students should realize is that languages are not just a set of words, but concepts and therefore, words, expressions and grammatical rules vary in all languages and that is the reason why literal translation does not work in most cases. Reality is seen from many different points of view and their minds structure ideas in different ways. So it is very important to be familiarized with the structures of target language and understand that their mother tongue works in a different way.

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