

RESEARCH PAPER

**PERMEABILITY OF INTERLANGUAGE SYSTEM:
A CASE STUDY OF INTERLANGUAGE SYSTEM OF
JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS OF
SMP N 2 SURAKARTA
LEARNING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE**



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**POSTGRADUATE PROGRAM OF LANGUAGE STUDY
MUHAMMADIYAH UNIVERSITY OF SURAKARTA**

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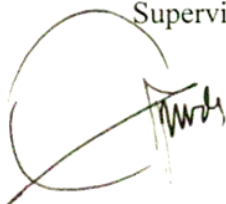
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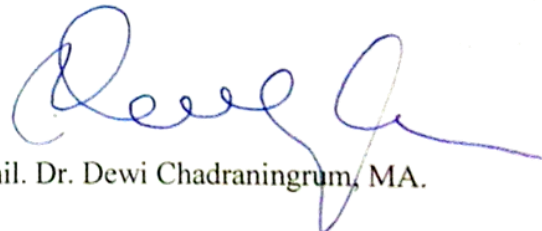
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**PERMEABILITY OF INTERLANGUAGE SYSTEM: A CASE STUDY OF
INTERLANGUAGE SYSTEM OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS OF SMP N 2
SURAKARTA LEARNING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

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ABSTRACT

The present study aims at describing the permeability of interlanguage: a case study of interlanguage system of junior high school students of SMP N 2 Surakarta learning English as a foreign language. The objective of the study is to find out (1) the types of the students' native language (Indonesian) and the target language (English) influence into the students' interlanguage system; (2) the degree of the influence of Indonesian (as the students' native language) as well as the target language (English) into the students' interlanguage system.

The type of the research is descriptive qualitative research. The writer uses elicitation technique and documentation in collecting data. The data of the present study consist of erroneous sentences taken from composition written by the students. In collecting the data, there are at least three major stages have been done: the writer assigned the students to write English composition, the writer reads every composition accurately to identify the erroneous sentences, the writers wrote down all the erroneous sentences into a list and used them as the data.

In analyzing the data there are at least four major stages have been done, namely: identification of errors, classification, description, and explanation. To recognize the errors, the writer has utilized the framework provided by Shridar. The writer has accumulated approximately 288 sentences containing different type of errors and used as the data of this study. The errors accumulated, then, classified using comparative taxonomy in order to find out the influence of the students' native language (Indonesian) and the target language (English) into the students' interlanguage system

The writer reaches the conclusion from this study as follows: (1) the students' interlanguage system is influenced by booth native language (Indonesian) and target language (English); (2) the influence is in the level of morphology and syntax; (3) the students' native language (Indonesian) contribute more influence compared with the target language (English) as the percentage shows 56.25% of Indonesian influence and 43.75% of English influence.

Keywords: *interlanguage system, permeability of interlanguage system, native language influence, target language influence.*

A. Background of the Study

Learning foreign language for the non-native speakers is not easy. Achieving the perfection of mastering foreign language becomes the never-ending process for those who learn it. Emergence of errors is natural in acquiring it. The emergence of errors in students' linguistic system can be called as interlanguage. Interlanguage is a situation in which students' linguistic system is influenced by students' mother tongue linguistic system (for instance, *Bahasa Indonesia*) and students' target language linguistic system (English). The term of interlanguage was first proposed by Selinker (1972) in Fauziati (2008:155) to refer to the students' linguistic

system that is different from both students' mother tongue linguistic system and target language linguistic system because it has its own system.

According to Adjemian (1976) in Fauziati (2008:158), there are three major characteristics of interlanguage, those are (1) systematicity, (2) permeability, and (3) fossilization. Systematicity of interlanguage is errors that are consistent in rule and feature. Interlanguage is also permeable toward infiltration of native language linguistic system and target language linguistic system. Learners' system can fossilize when permeability and dynamicity of interlanguage lost. Based on those characteristics, the researcher is interested in conducting deeper analysis towards one of the characteristics of interlanguage. It is the permeability of interlanguage system.

The researcher wants to investigate the influence of mother tongue linguistic system and target language linguistic system towards the students' interlanguage system. The researcher uses the framework of Error Analysis proposed by James, Corder, and Shridar to recognize the errors. Then, he uses the interlanguage framework introduced by Selinker, Adjemian, and Corder to identify the influence of both mother tongue and target language to the students' interlanguage system. The object of the study is students' compositions of SMP N 2 Surakarta and the focus of the study is the erroneous sentences found in their compositions. The researcher specifically studies the second characteristic of interlanguage that is permeability.

In conducting this research, the researcher realizes the significance of interlanguage for teacher and learner. Interlanguage reflects the learner's evolving system of rules, and results from a variety of processes, including the influence of the first language ('transfer'), contrastive interference from the target language, and the overgeneralization of newly encountered rules. Learner can use it as a means to see how far the target language he acquires. Then, the learner can take into account the possibility of learner's conscious attempt to control their learning. The significance of interlanguage for the teacher is to give a detail description about learners' linguistic system to help the teacher to understand the learners' problems better and try to provide appropriate help to learners, so that they can achieve competence in the language they are trying to learn.

Some relevant studies have been conducted by Grauberg, Hobson, Caneday, Yeti, etc. The current study is different from Grauberg (1971) who focused his investigation on the first language interference which results in interlanguage errors. The second research conducted by Caneday research (University of North Dakota, 2001) picks among speakers' acquisition of English who are children 9 and 12 ages as the subject of the study and observes the stages of coda development in the production of the intermediate among speakers of English as a second language. The third previous study by Yeti (2003) concerned with learning strategies used by

students to improve their speaking skill. The fourth research by Sarmedi Agus Siregar (University of North Sumatra, 2004) takes students learning English in Medan and investigates the influences students' interlanguage in acquiring the target language.

The current study is built on the previous research, to make the previous research as framework, especially in using error analysis framework to identify intrerlanguage errors. The current study also tries to extend them by relating the interlanguage errors with the learning strategies used by the students. The researcher takes the students of eight grade students of SMP N 2 Surakarta as the subject of the research and picks their compositions as the object of the research. The researcher investigates permeability of students' interlanguage learning English as foreign language. He describes the types of error and analyzes them by surface strategy taxonomy and linguistic category. He also gives explanation how the native language and target language influence the students' interlanguage system.

Based on the background of the study, the researcher conducts a research with the following objectives: (1) to describe the types of the students' native language (Indonesian) influence into the students' interlanguage system; (2) to describe the types of the target language (English) influence into the students' interlanguage system; (3) to describe the degree of the influence of Indonesian (as the students' native language) into the students' interlanguage system; and (4) to explain the degree of the influence of English (as the target language) into the students' interlanguage system.)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Type of the Research

This study is descriptive qualitative. The descriptive qualitative research is a kind of research method without any statistic procedure. Ary (1983: 94) said that descriptive research studies are designed to obtain information concerning the current states of phenomena. They are directed toward determining the nature of situation as it exists at the time of the study. There is no administration or control treatment as found in experimental research. The aim is to describe what exists with respect to the variables of condition.

In this study, the writer attempt to describe the permeability of interlanguage system of students of SMPN 2 Surakarta. The findings would give contribution to both theoretical as well as practical matter since the explanation about the phenomena will provide implication in foreign language learning and teaching.

Data and Data Source

The data of the present study consist of erroneous sentences taken from composition written by students of Junior High School of SMPN 2 Surakarta, academic year of 2014. The

writer collected 40 students' composition randomly and listed them in the frame of erroneous sentences. They are listed and used as the data. The researcher gives instructions to the students to write English composition. The students choose one of two kinds of composition namely descriptive text and recount text.

Data Collection Technique

In collecting data, the writer uses elicitation technique and documentation technique. Elicitation technique used to lure students to produce the writing, and to give instruction to write English composition. This technique is designed to get a person to actively produce speech or writing, for example asking someone to describe a picture, to tell a story, or to finish an incomplete sentence. In linguistics, this technique is used to prompt native speakers to produce linguistic data for analysis. Furthermore, in teaching and second language research, such technique is used to get a better picture of learner abilities or a better understanding of interlanguage than the study of naturally occurring speech or writing can provide. (Richard in Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics Third Edition, 2002: 176).

Data Analysis

In this study, the writer uses descriptive analysis to conduct the data analysis that has been carried out through the following steps: (1) Identify the errors. Sentences are considered as free from errors when they are appropriate and acceptable; (2) Classify the accumulated data in terms of comparative taxonomy; (3) Identify the influence of students' native language (Indonesian) on the learners' interlanguage system; (4) Identify the influence of target language (English) on the students' interlanguage system; (5) Calculate to the degree of influence from both native language and target language.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the researcher describes the data taken from students' of SMP Negeri 2 Surakarta comprehensively. The main point of this section is describing interlanguage that is influenced by the learners' mother tongue and target language by observing the evidence which is shown in their composition.

1. The Influence of the Students' Native Language (Indonesian) into the Students' Interlanguage System

The learners' mother tongue system may interference the acquiring of the target language or transfer into learners' developing second language system. The influence of the students' native language is divided into two categories: Morphological and Syntactic Level.

a. Morphological Level

This study shows that the students' interlanguage system is interfered by their mother tongue. They have tried using Indonesian terms in their interlanguage system. The morphological influences from the native language that the students have produced are as follows: (1) literal translation from Indonesian word, (2) mother tongue switch, and (3) literal translation which results in wrong selection of word form.

1) Literal Translation from Indonesia Word

There are cases where the students are supposed to convey certain meanings beyond their vocabulary mastery. To cope with this problem, they try to make use of whatever relevant prior knowledge they have for those tasks. They seem to have relied on the already acquired English vocabulary. Consequently, a significant number of interlanguage involves the literal translation from Indonesian into English. For example in Indonesia "teman sekelas" was translated into *classroom friend*; the correct English is *classmate*. Here are other examples found in the students work:

(1) We make *palace sand* in the beach.

NL: *Istana pasir*

(2) I and my friend go to school together *climb* a bus.

NL: *naik*

b) Mother Tongue Switch

Students who don't have good English vocabularies tend to use their native language vocabularies as the last resort. It is very often that students who don't understand the English words will use Indonesian words, because somehow they are unable to find them in the dictionary or they are already just the way they are. When switching from English into Indonesian, the students have used full replacement of Indonesian words (Tarone, 1981: 61). In other words, they do not make any modification to the words they use such as in the sentences below.

(1) We around about Jogja City to climb *andong* carriage.

(2) We watch *wayang kulit* at Sri Wedari Solo.

(3) The *dalang* is Ki Enthus Sudarsono.

c) Literal Translation Which Results Wrong Selection of Word Form

Students were so often confused by the usage of English word form. Their ability to recognize the correct way to make a good sentence is various. Students are often to forget the

role of each word. In this case, they selected the wrong form of word. The influence of the native language seems control their erroneous in creating such systematic false. They seem to be confused in using the verb form of English words. It is because their native language system does not give an exact control in using such form. Here the researchers found some data related to mis-selection of word form.

(1) I *breakfast* with fried rice and tea.

NL: makan pagi

(2) I *motorcycle* to school everyday.

NL: naik motor

(3) Every day I *prayer* five times a day.

NL: sholat

b. Syntactical Level

This study also found syntactic interference shown in students' composition. Indonesian structure is seen in students' composition as a result of students expressing their ideas. Indonesian structure has similarity and difference with English so that students should be careful in applying such structure in the target language. The differences should be given complete intention in order to prevent appearing the errors. IL system in syntactic level involves the use of the Indonesian structure to convey intended meaning in English. The syntactic interference include as follows: 1) using Indonesian structure in noun phrase, (2) simplified negation, (3) using Indonesian sentence pattern.

1) Using Indonesian Structure in Noun Phrase

The different word structure between English and Indonesian is the major problem for students in creating a good English sentence. Using Indonesian pattern is one of the simple ways to express students' ideas into English. The literal translation could occur in a phrase. Students often use Indonesian pattern in their phrases as a result of their incomplete competence in mastering English. The word structure including a phrase may occur to be difficult to understand and yet students might think that it is very easy to create a phrase structure the same as their first language sentence structure. A phrase is a small group of words that adds meaning to a word. A noun phrase is a group of words that does the work of noun. It is either a pronoun or any group of words that can be replaced by a pronoun. There are some differences between the structure of a phrase in English and in Indonesian. This is the problem which often occurs when students are trying to transfer the word meaning. They are still often be influenced by their native language. Here are some examples found in the students work:

(1) Andi is my *classmate new*.

NL: teman sekelas baru

(2) My *novel favorite* is Harry Potter.

NL: novel faforit

(3) *Name my father* is Eddy.

NL: nama ayah saya

2) Simplified Negation

Negation is the contradiction or denial of something. In Bahasa Indonesia, the way to create such sentence is not as same as in English. The sentence structure for both is different. It is very usual for Bahasa Indonesia speaker to create simplified negation. In English, the negation sentence cannot be as simple as in Bahasa Indonesia. Here, students have conducted several negation sentences in the form of simplification because of the interference of their native language, Bahasa Indonesia.

(1) I don't like mathematics because *not understand*.

NL: tidak faham

(2) I don't like English because *not understand* the teacher.

NL: tidak faham

(3) My mother is a house wife. She *not work*.

NL: tidak bekerja

3) The Use of Indonesian Sentence Pattern

The use of Indonesian pattern in sentence is a kind of literal translation (a translation word by word). A word-for-word translation can be used in some languages but sometimes it works and sometimes it does not. For example, there are some similarities between the two languages, word order in Indonesian follows the same pattern as English (subject + verb + object) "Saya pergi ke sekolah" can be correctly translated into "I go to school". However, in rather complex sentences this literal translation does not work as in a sentence "saya dan ibu saya pergi ke pasar berbelanja" translated into "I wit my mother go to the market shopping".

This is what happens to the students' works; the students often translate the sentence literally. In other words the students used Indonesian Sentence pattern in their English work. We can also say that the students' interlanguage system was influenced by the students' native language (Indonesian). Which follows are the examples:

(1) In the performance we dancing during singing.

NL: Dalam penampilan kami menari sambil bernyanyi.

(2) We chat together at the way to jogjakarta.

NL: Kami ngobrol bersama di perjalanan ke Jogja.

(3) In the village we went meet old uncle and old aunt.

NL: Di desa kami pergi menemui pakdhe dan budhe.

2. The Influence of the Target Language (English) into the Students' Interlanguage System.

Second language has also given significance to students learning English. It could cause students' interlanguage system. "Intralingual transfer is the negative of items within the target language or put another way, the incorrect generalization of rules within the target language" (Brown, 2000:224). The negative items produced by learners do not reflect the structure of their first language. It is an intervention from second language which they are learning. The interference of English in students' interlanguage includes: (1) Morphological Level, and (2) Syntactic Level.

a. Morphological Level

This analysis also found interference that came from morphological level shown in students' composition. A morpheme is the minimal grammatical unit. Morphemes are established and delimited in a language by comparing word forms with one another and noting the recurrent pieces that compose them and every word is wholly analyzable into one or more morphemes (Robins, 1980:155). Morphemes could be classified into bound morpheme and free morphemes. A bound morpheme is one that must appear with at least one other morpheme, bound or free, in a word. A free morpheme is one that may constitute a word (free form) by itself (Srijono, 2001: 50). The students interlanguage system had been influence by the target language (English) in the form of free morpheme (word) and bound morphemes (prefixes and suffixes). A free morpheme is one that may constitute a word (free form) by itself (Srijono, 2001: 50). This study presents several cases which students' interlanguage system was influenced by the target language (English) at lexical level including (1) false friend (similar in meaning), (2) addition of article, (3) wrong choice of preposition, (4) wrong selection of pronoun, and (5) omission of -s in plural form.

1) False Friend (Similar in Meaning)

False friends are pairs of words or phrases in two languages that look or sound similar, but differ significantly in meaning. Those words or phrases are often confused with words or

(1) We practice valley ball *in* Monday and Thursday.

TL: *on*

(2) I always get up early *at* the morning.

TL: *in*

(3) Our school is *at* 07.00 A.M. to 1.30 P.M.

TL: *from 07.00 A.M to 1.30 P.M.*

4) Wrong Selection of Pronoun

As the students' vocabulary and grammar grow, they used different kinds of pronoun. In English, there are five different types of pronoun based on its function: subjective, objective, adjective, possessive, and reflexive. They are actually not quite problematic but the students were still confused in using them. The result is that they used English pronoun incorrectly. That is to say the students' interlanguage system was influenced by the target language (English), as in the examples below:

(1) My mother asks *we* to boil water and to make hot tea.

TL: *us*

(2) My mother and *me* have the same hobby.

TL: *I*

(3) *Me* and Imah continue study at home.

TL: *I*

5) Omission of –s in Plural Form

Plural is one of the categories of grammatical number in many languages. The plural morpheme in English is suffixed to the end of most nouns such as –s or –es. Learners make permeable sentences in form of omission or addition; in this case they do omission of –s in plural form. Learners may do not understand the function of –s in plural form that leads them to confuse in applying it. So that they omit –s signed as the plural form in their sentences. The writer found three sentences having omission –s in plural form as follows:

(1) We have a lot of *experience* in Jogja.

TL: *experiences*

(2) We took many *picture* in there to.

TL: *pictures*

(3) There are also my **friend** who listen to music.

friends

b. Syntactic Level (Grammar)

The findings indicate that the students' interlanguage system was influenced the target language (English) at the syntactic level, or the grammatical level. There are (1) The Use of V1 instead of V2, (2) Omission of BE as a Verb, and (3) The Use of Incorrect Conjunction, which follows are the description of each.

1) The Use of V1 instead of V2

The verbs are categorized into V1 (present), V2 (past), V3 (past perfect) and V-ing (continuous). The V1 indicates present tense whereas the V2 indicates past tense. The finding shows that the students often apply wrongly of those verbs. The students used the knowledge about verbs that they already knew but they did it wrongly. It indicates that their interlanguage system was influenced by the target language system (English system).

Students still get confusion in applying their prior knowledge to produce English especially in using V1 or V2. Here are the examples:

(1) We finally *go* to home

TL: went

(2) We *take* a bath first and then breakfast.

TL: took

(3) In Jogja we *buy* some souvenirs

TL: bought

2) Omission of BE as a Verb

Students omitted BE as verbs due to they did not fully understand the rules of using it. The interlanguage which have been produced by students is a sign that their knowledge of English is still developing. Their interlanguage is influenced by their target language (English). The students omitted BE as a verb in the exam[les below:

(1) They ____ just looking around.

TL: were

(2) Indah and family ____ having picnic in Parangtritis beach.

TL: were

(3) I ____ very happy.

TL: was

3) The Use of Incorrect Conjunction

Combining sentences seems to be one of the grammatical problems faced by the students. The problem often lies on what conjunction can be used to connect certain sentences and less frequently on whether or not the sentence needs a conjunction. The data show that the students' interlanguage system was influenced by the target language (English) especially in using conjunction. The data show the students used English conjunctions in a wrong way, as shown in the examples below:

(1) I like English *and* it is fun.

TL: *because*

(2) Indah is my friend *also* my neighbor.

TL: *and*

3. The Degree of the Influence of Indonesian (as the Students' Native Language) Into the Students' Interlanguage System

The study shows the total number of instances and the percentage of the influence of the students' native language (Indonesia) into the students' interlanguage system as shown in table 1 below.

Table 1: Degree of Influence of the Mother Tongue (Indonesian) to the Students' Interlanguage System

The study shows the total number of instances and the percentage of the influence of the students' native language (Indonesia) into the students' interlanguage system as shown in table 1 below.

NO	Linguistic Category	Number of instances	%
1	Morphological Level	74	45.7
	1) Mother Tongue Switch,	36	22.2
	2) the use of false friend (Similar in Meaning)	26	16
	3) Wrong selection of Word Form.	14	8.6
2	Syntactic Level	88	54.3
	1) The use of Indonesian Sentence Pattern	48	29.6
	2) Using Indonesian structure in Noun Phrase,	23	14
	3) Negation.	15	9.2
	Total	162	100%

The study shows the number of instances taken from the data of the influence of the native language (Indonesian) into the students' interlanguage system is 162 cases which include morphological level 74 cases and syntactic level 88 cases.

4. The Degree of the Influence of English (as the Target Language) into the Students' Interlanguage System

The study shows the total number of instances and the percentage of the influence of the students' native language (Indonesia) into the students' interlanguage system as shown in table 2 below.

Table 2: Degree of Influence of the Target language (English) into the Students' Interlanguage System

NO	Linguistic Category	Number of instances	%
1	Morphological Level	74	58.7
	1) False Friend	21	16.8
	2) Addition of Article	17	13.5
	3) Wrong Choice of Preposition	14	11
	4) Wrong Selection of Pronoun	11	8.7
	5) Omission of –s in Plural Form	11	8.7
2	Syntactic Level	52	41.3
	1) the use of V1 instead of V2	28	22.2
	2) Omission Be as a verb	17	13.6
	3) The Use of Incorrect Conjunction	7	5.5
	Total	126	100%

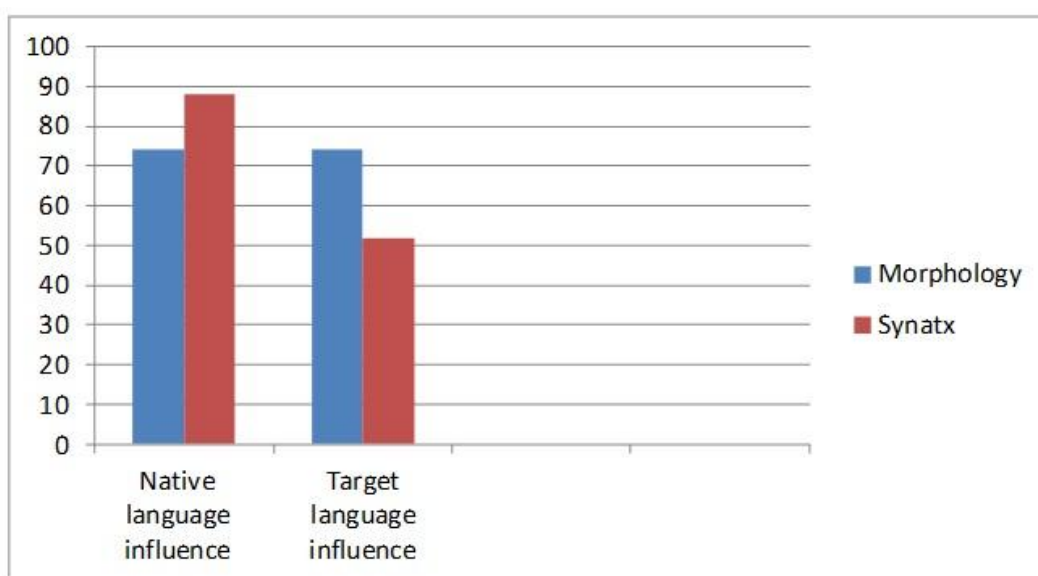
The study shows the number of instances taken from the data of the influence of the target language (English) into the students' interlanguage system is 126 cases which include morphological level 74 cases and syntactic level 52 cases.

5. Degree of Influence of the Native Language (Indonesian) and the Target Language (English) into the Students' Interlanguage System

This study has revealed the number of instances of the students' native language (Indonesian) into the students' interlanguage system is 162 cases whereas the number of instances of the target language influence into the students' interlanguage system is 126 cases as shown in table 3 below.

Table 3: Degree of Influence of the Native Language (Indonesian) and the Target Language (English) into the Students' Interlanguage System

Type of Influence	Linguistic Level		Number of Instances	
	Morphology	Syntax	Total	%
Native Language Influence	74	88	162	56.25
Target language Influence	74	52	126	43.75
Total Number of Instances	148	140	288	100



Conclusion

Based on the research finding and discussion of the permeability of the interlanguage system reflected in the composition written by the students of SMP N II Surakarta presented in the previous chapter, the problem statements raised in the research can be answered. As a final point, the researcher provides several conclusions, as follows:

1. The influence of native language/L1 (Indonesian) linguistic system to the students' IL system are involving morphological influence and syntactic influence.
2. The influence of target language/L2 (English) linguistic system to the students' interlanguage system are involving morphological influence and syntactic influence.
3. The degree of influence of native language/L1 influence to the students' interlanguage system shows higher percentage compared to the influence of target language to the students' interlanguage system.
4. The degree of influence of target language/L2 (English) into the students' interlanguage system shows lower compared to that of native language influence. The study reveals the degree of influence of L1 (Indonesian) is higher than the degree of influence from the target language

(English). The influence from the native language is 56.25% and from the target language is 43.75%.

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