

## ERROR ANALYSIS OF THE STUDENTS' TEST RESULT ON USING PERSONAL PRONOUNS

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**Abstract:** The objectives of this research were to know the percentage of students' error in using Personal Pronouns and to know what kind of Personal Pronouns error that is often made by the students. A case study which used a descriptive analysis was utilized in this study. The sample of this research was students at grade X MIPA-1 of SMAN 1 Mesjid Raya. To get the data, the students were given 25 multiple choice questions about Personal Pronouns. Then, the students' test paper were analyzed based on types of Personal Pronoun errors. The result of the analysis showed that the percentage error of Personal Pronouns were: Possessive Pronoun 70 (73,68%), Reflexive Pronoun 64 (67,36%), Possessive Adjective 63 (66,31%), Object Pronoun 59 (62,10%) and the least made errors are Subject Pronoun consisted of 40 errors (42,10%). Based on all of the findings above, it was found that the most errors which were made by students at the first grade of SMAN 1 Mesjid Raya, Aceh Besar; is in using Possessive Pronoun. These findings suggest that the students need to be given much attention and support by their teachers in understanding different types of personal pronouns in English.

**Key words:** Error Analysis, Personal pronouns

Personal Pronouns are part of grammar. It is very important in teaching and learning English. Braine and Claire May (1992) state that writing clear sentences requires learning the rules of English grammar and mechanics such as the correct use of verbs and pronouns. In addition, mastering grammar is an important point in language. Little mistakes in grammar can become a serious problem in writing, especially for the students of the senior high school. Thus, mastering grammar is very useful for students in the process of writing because to make sentences they have to know grammatical rules.

However, English grammar is very different from Indonesian grammar. Often, it makes students confuse to understand how to use different types of personal pronouns. In English, there are many types of Personal Pronouns and they also have

different position and function, as the first person in English used as a Subject Pronoun (I), object (me), Possessive Adjective (my), Possessive Pronoun (mine) and Reflexive Pronoun (myself). In Indonesian grammar, first person (saya) is used in any position in sentences and does not change to other forms or position and as the result it makes the students are confuse to use English grammar especially Personal Pronouns either in speaking or writing.

In Indonesia, English grammar is studied by the students from Junior High School up to University level in order to be able to use it correctly. If someone has good skill in English, we can know it through his/her actualization in speaking and writing, for example: when someone speak fluently and people can understand what he is talking about, so that he can be said that he and

the listener are good particularly in English grammar. It is also the same as writing, if someone can read and understand what he has written and understood about the content is assumed that he has also knowledge about English grammar.

Grammar is an essential language skill and it is important for learning foreign language. According to Scrivener (2003), grammar is not just a dry list of facts and rules. It is in our heads and it is a living resource that gives us the ability to communicate our ideas and feelings and to understand what other people say or write to us. In this case, knowledge about grammar has an effect on the four skills (listening, reading, speaking and writing), so everyone must learn grammar first to get a good skill in English. Knowledge about personal pronouns and their functions is included as an important part of grammar. In reading, the student will understand the text and know the writer's idea if they have a good ability in grammar and also in reading, speaking, listening and writing.

In this case, the writers choose Personal Pronouns because the students are familiar with the material but sometimes they are still confused how to use it in the sentences. The writer make and use the test to find students' Personal Pronouns error because the test can demonstrate how well the students master the material. In addition to that, the teacher also can get the feedback in using Personal Pronouns. Also, the researchers found that the ability of the first grade students of Senior High School (SMAN 1) Mesjid Raya, Aceh Besar was poor in using English Personal Pronouns, most of them made mistake. Referring to this circumstance, we were keen to seek the answer to the following research questions:

1. What kind of personal pronoun errors are often made by the EFL students?
2. What are the percentages of students' errors in using Personal Pronouns?
3. What kind of Personal Pronouns error that is often made by the students?

We hope the findings of this research can be beneficial to teachers in understanding the difficulty of the students in using several types of English personal pronouns.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **The Importance of Grammar**

Grammar is important for student in learning English, because with has skill in grammar student know how to use or make a good paragraph in writing and in use sentences. According to Ur (1999), in the case of the learners, grammatical rules enable them to know and apply how such sentence patterns should be put together. The teaching of grammar should also ultimately centre attention on the way grammatical items or sentence patterns are correctly used. In other words, teaching grammar should encompass language structure or sentence patterns, meaning and use.

Furthermore, grammar is thought to furnish the basis for a set of language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. In listening and speaking, grammar plays a crucial part in grasping and expressing spoken language (e.g. expressions) since learning the grammar of a language is considered necessary to acquire the capability of producing grammatically acceptable utterances in the language (Corder: 1988, Widodo: 2004). In reading, grammar enables learners to comprehend sentence interrelationship in a paragraph, a passage

and a text. In the context of writing, grammar allows the learners to put their ideas into intelligible sentences so that they can successfully communicate in a written form. Lastly, in the case of vocabulary, grammar provides a pathway to learners how some lexical items should be combined into a good sentence so that meaningful and communicative statements or expressions can be formed. In other words, Doff (2000) says that by learning grammar students can express meanings in the form of phrases, clauses and sentences.

English has four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing, but in learning English to the fullest, the students also have to learn about grammar points. In this script, the writer will discuss about pronouns especially is Personal Pronouns. The Personal Pronouns also have five types: Subject Pronouns, Object Pronouns, Possessive Adjective, Possesive Pronouns and Reflexive Pronoun. The explanation of each will be discussed in the following section.

#### **A Brief Explanation of Personal Pronouns**

Before explaining about Personal Pronouns, the writers would like to explain about pronoun. According to Frank (1972), the traditional definition of pronoun is a word that takes the places of a noun. Modern grammarians who regard position and function as the decisive factors in classifying a part of speech often consider pronoun as a subclass of noun.

According to Guigan (2011), that pronoun is a word used as a place-holder of a noun, noun phrase, or a different pronoun. Pronouns are usually used in writing and speech as a way of

keeping the flow of the words smooth by reducing repeated use of the full subject or object word, Pronouns usually come after the noun they are replacing.

Izzan (2007) describes that personal pronoun is a kind of pronoun. Pronoun consists of eight types, they are: personal pronoun, interrogative pronoun, relative pronoun, demonstrative pronoun, reflexive pronoun, reciprocal pronouns, indefinite pronoun, and possessive pronoun. The differences of many pronouns are depending on grammatical properties as gender, number, person, and case.

Personal pronouns are part of pronouns that are words that replace a noun or noun phrase, but they commonly refer to person and thing. As Kollin (1991) says "Personal Pronouns are the ones we usually think of when the word pronoun comes to mind, we generally label them on the basis of person and members."

There are five types of Personal Pronouns which we focus on this study, namely Subject Pronouns, Object Pronouns, Possessive Adjective, Possesive Pronouns, and Reflexive Pronouns. For more about these types of Personal Pronouns, the discussion will be elaborated below:

Subject Pronouns is a Personal Pronouns that is used as a subject of a verb. Subject Pronouns function as the subject of the sentence or a clause. They are one of the easiest pronouns to identify in a sentence. The subject pronoun in English are I, you, she, he, it, we, and they.

Object Pronoun appears after verbs or after preposition with a certain type of verb preposition combination, a pronoun object appears between the verb and preposition, for example *call him up*. The object pronoun in English are me, you, him,

her, it, us, and them.

Possessive Adjective is followed immediately by a noun, they do not stand alone, but refer to the possessor and not to the thing possessive: My, your, his, her, its, our and their. The Possesives are used before nouns to say who is the possessor of the noun. They are invariable, i.e., they do not change: My book – my books, our child – our children, his friend – his friends, her brother and sister.

Possessive Pronoun are not followed immediately by a noun, they stand-alone. It also shows possession the same as Possessive Adjective. Mine, yours, his, hers, its, ours, theirs are possessive pronoun in English.

Reflexive Pronoun is combination of self with one of the Personal Pronouns or with the impersonal pronoun one, generally refers to an animate being usually a person. The most common use of the Reflexive Pronoun is as an object that reflects back to the subject. For example: Myself, yourself, himself, herself, itself, ourselves, yourselves and themselves.

### **Error Analysis in Language Teaching**

Learning second language or English language does not the same as learning first language or mother tongue. Learning mother tongue or first language is not influenced by other language but it is different for students who are learning English. It is because the process of learning is influenced by their mother tongue as their first language and it causes an error and mistake in learning. It is very normal and unavoidable to happen what is mentioned during the learning process, as William (2000) says that

current theories of how we learn languages recognize that habit formation is only one part of the process. Therefore, to achieve English acquisition, the students must get through some errors first, and then they can learn from their own errors.

### **The Meaning of Error**

Human learning is fundamentally a process that involves the making of error and mistake assumptions that form an important aspect of learning virtually any skill or acquiring information. Dullay (1982) defines errors as the flawed side of learner speech or writing. They are those parts of conversation or composition that delicate from some selected norm of mature language performance. It means that there is something wrong in norms of language performance; the making of errors is so unavoidable in learning process. Besides, the making of errors is one part of learning and no one can learn without the making of errors.

Meanwhile, Brown (2000) states that errors as a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker, reflecting the interlingual competence of the learner. Learner of language has different competences of level in learning English and automatically that has involved different cause of error. For example if learners ask: does John can sing?, they are probably reflecting a competence level in which all verbs require a pre-posed do auxiliary for question formation; so, he has committed an error. On the other hand, Harmer (1983) said error is the result of incorrect rule learning language has been stored in the brain incorrectly. That error may happen in teaching

learning process, maybe it is caused by the teacher, they have the lack of grammar competences in English teaching or by students who have different understanding or wrong perception. Then, they save on the brain for long time and improve in their English grammar.

When we talk about error, we may also think about mistake. Error and mistake are not the same, it is crucial to make distinction between error and mistake and most of people still misunderstand about the definition of both. To be more classified between error and mistake, Jeremy Harmer said mistake is less serious since it is the retrieval that is faulty not the knowledge. In other word, the students know the rule, but they make a slip when producing it. Meanwhile Brown (2000) asserts that a mistake refers to a performance error that is either a random guess or a slip. In that meaning it is a failure to utilize a known system correctly. All people make mistakes in both native and second language situations.

Hubbard (1983) states errors caused by lack of knowledge about the target language (English) or by incorrect hypotheses about it; and mistakes caused by temporary lapses of memory, confusion, slips of the tongue and so on. Another way to differentiate between error and mistake is if the learners can correct themselves, it is probably mistake, but if they cannot, it is an error. From its definition of error above, we have seen that there are some classifications of error, they are as follows:

a. Errors of competence are the result of application of rules by the first language learner which do not (yet) correspond the second language norm.

b. Errors of performances are the result of mistake in language use and manifest themselves as repeats, false starts, corrections or slips of the tongue. Error of competence is knowing what is grammatically correct; Error performance occurs frequently in the speech of both native speaker and second language learner or what actually occurs in practice.

The fact that learners do make errors and that these errors can be observed, analyzed and classified to reveal something or the system operating within the learner, led to a surge of study of learners errors called errors analysis.

### **The Causes of Errors**

Corder (1974) claims that there are three major the causes of error, they are mother tongue interference, over generalization and error encouraged by teaching material or method. Meanwhile, Richard (1974) divides causes of error into four areas; those are over-generalization, ignorance of rule restriction, incomplete application of rules and false concept hypothesized.

According to Norris (1983), there are three factors that can be classified as the causes of errors, they are:

#### **a. Carelessness**

It is often closely related to lack of motivation. Lack of motivation may be the result of the presentation style done by the teacher, which does not suit the students, or may be the materials are not interesting for the students.

#### **b. First language interferences**

First language interference is the result of the language habits that have been established in the

students' native language. When the students use English, they usually bring or use the native language habit in the target language they being learn. It is similar to what Corder said before.

### **c. Translation**

It is the most common error made by students, translating word by word of idiomatic expression in the first students language can produce error in this type. This usually happen as the result of a situation when a learner is asked to communicate something but does not know appropriate expression or structure.

## **METHOD**

The descriptive research was used in this study. Descriptive research involves the description, recording, analysis and interpretation of the present nature, composition or processes of phenomena which focuses on prevailing conditions, or how a person or thing behaves or function in the present. It often involves some type of comparison or contrast. In other words, descriptive research was defined as a purposive process of gathering, analyzing, classifying and tabulating data about prevailing conditions, practices, beliefs, processes, trends and cause effect relationships. Then making addequate and accurate interpretation about such data with or without the aid of statistical method (Calderon, 2012).

In this study, we conducted a case study and wanted to know what kind and the percentages of students' error in using personal pronouns and to know what kind of personal pronouns error that is often made by the students at the first grate of SMAN1 Mesjid Raya, Aceh Besar.

Castilo (2009) states that a case study is

generally a large collection of individuals or objects that is the main focus of a scientific query. In this research, the population of the study includes all of students at the first grade of SMAN 1 MESJID RAYA. Because of the population is too large, so the writers take class X MIPA-1 which consists of 19 students as the sample.

To get the data, the writers used test as the main research instrument. The test was multiple choice that will be given to the first year students of SMAN 1 MESJID RAYA, Aceh Besar. This test was focused on the English Personal Pronouns which consists of 25 items and each number of Personal Pronouns was put randomly. The distribution of Personal Pronouns was five questions about Subject Pronouns and five questions about Object Pronoun, five questions about Possesive Adjective, five question about Possesive Pronoun and five questions about Reflexive Pronoun.

In collecting the data, we used the four steps suggested by McCharty (1993) as follows:

- 1). Collecting the data from the result of the students writing.

The researcher tried to determine the data that was collected to be treated, e.g finding the Personal Pronouns that were used by the students in multiple choice. Students were given about 25 questions related to the Personal Pronouns.

- 2). Identifying the students' errors

The researchers tried to identify the students' errors by focusing on wrong Subject Pronoun, Object Pronoun, Possesive Adjective, Possesive Pronoun and Reflexive



Pronoun in context usage.

### 3). Classifying the students' errors

After researcher identified and divided the data, the researcher classified the errors based on their categories Subject Pronoun, Object Pronoun, Possesive Adjective, Possesive Pronoun and Reflexive Pronoun in context usage.

### 4). Calculating the percentage

After classifying the students' errors, the researchers calculated the students' categories errors and made percentage of each error classifications.

We calculated the percentage of error in each items by using the following formula:

$$P = \frac{f}{n} \times 100\% \quad (1)$$

Explanation :

P = percentage

F = frequency

n = total number of student

100 = constant value

For calculating the total percentage of errors, we used the following formula:

$$P = \frac{f}{N \times n} \times 100\% \quad (2)$$

Explanation :

P = percentage

F = frequency

N = total number of student

n = total number of item

100 = constant value

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### The Percentage of Personal Pronoun Errors

After collecting the data from the students, the errors were identified and then classified based on Personal Pronouns types of errors. The writers

classified the errors into Subject Pronoun, Object Pronoun, Possesive Adjective, Possesive Pronoun and Reflexive Pronoun. After classified the kind of Personal Pronouns errors, the percentage was determined based on the highest to the lowest errors in all kinds of Personal Pronouns.

Based on the data analysis above, we found the total frequency of Personal Pronouns error from 25 items with 19 students as the sample. There were 40 errors of Subject Pronoun, 59 errors of Object Pronoun, 63 errors of Possesive Adjective, 70 errors of Possesive Pronoun and 64 errors of Reflexive Pronoun.

We further arranged the result of this analysis based on the highest percentage to the lowest percentage of errors in using Personal Pronouns types. The result showed that the percentage of Possesive Pronoun is 73,68%, Reflexive Pronoun is 67,36%, Possesive Adjective is 66,31%, Object Pronoun is 62,10% and Subject Pronoun is 42,10%.

**Table 1. The Percentage of Errors based on the Highest to the Lowest of Total Errors**

No.	Kinds of Personal Pronouns	The Total Frequency of Errors	The Total Percentages of Errors
1	Possesive Pronoun	70	73,68%
2	Reflexive Pronoun	64	67,36%
3	Possesive Adjective	63	66,31%
4	Object Pronoun	59	62,10%
5	Subject pronoun	40	42,10%

In this section, we will discuss and answer the research questions of this study namely:

1. What are the percentages of students' errors in using personal pronouns?
2. What kind of personal pronoun error that is often made by the students?

Based on the data analysis above, we found that the percentage of Personal Pronouns from the total frequency and percentage of errors from the highest to the lowest. The total errors from 25 items of Personal Pronouns are: Possessive Pronoun frequency of errors are 70 (73,68%), Reflexive Pronoun frequency of errors are 64 (67,36%), Possessive Adjective frequency of errors are 63 (66,31%), Object Pronoun frequency of errors are 59 (62,10%) and Subject Pronoun frequency of errors are 40 (42,10%).

It was found that the students of the first grade of SMAN 1 Mesjid Raya, Aceh Besar had difficulty in using Personal Pronouns, especially in using Possessive Pronoun. It can be seen from data presentation in the Table 1 that most of the students did errors in using Possessive Pronoun, with the total frequency of errors are 70 with the percentage 73,68%.

In conclusion, the students ought to learn more and more in mastering Personal Pronouns especially in using Possessive Pronoun. The teacher should explain and differentiate between the types of Personal pronouns and their usage.

## CONCLUSION

After finding out the result and analyzing it, we can conclude that most of the students have not understood about the form and the function of Personal Pronouns, especially Possessive Pronoun with the percentage of error 73,68%. This suggests that the students of SMAN 1 Mesjid Raya, Aceh Besar still find difficulties in using different types of Personal Pronoun, especially possessive pronoun. The teachers are hoped to give more explanation about Personal Pronouns and discriminating it between Subject Pronoun to Object Pronoun, Possessive Adjective to Possessive Pronoun and also Reflexive Pronoun.

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