



AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' ERRORS IN TRANSFORMING ACTIVE TO PASSIVE SENTENCE AT THE FOURTH SEMESTER OF STKIP MUHAMMADIYAH BOGOR

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ABSTRACT

Passive voice is one of the important English grammars that should be mastered because it is used in formal and on informal language. The students tend to make some grammatical errors in transforming active to passive sentence. The objectives of this research are to know the types of errors that students made in transforming active to passive sentence, to know the students problems in transforming active to passive sentence and to know the proportion of the students' errors. The subject of this research is 20 English students at the fourth semester of STKIP Muhammadiyah Bogor. The result of this research shows that the total number of errors that have been committed by the students based on surface strategy taxonomy is 280 errors, which falls into the following proportion of the four kinds of errors in surface strategy taxonomy: 126 errors of omission error, 18 errors of addition error, 120 errors of misformation error, and 16 errors of misordering error.

Key words: analysis, grammatical errors, passive voice.

Introduction

English has different pattern for passive voice compared with Indonesian language. Thus, foreign language learners in Indonesia got difficulties in changing active sentence to passive sentence. The construction of passive voice in *Bahasa Indonesia*, students just change the object of the sentence to be the subject of the sentence, and then change the verb by adding prefix “*di*” or “*ter*”. While in English the students should change the object of the active verb to be the subject of the passive verb, and then change the verb by adding “to be” and “past participle”. The changing of the verb form and the usage of the past participle are the most difficult aspects that the students find in learning passive voice of English. Therefore, the students tend to make an error in constructing passive sentences.

Burt and Dulay (1982:139) say that error is part utterance or writing, which deviates from the standard norm of performance of adult native speaker. The statement means that a grammatical error is a deviation which the students make in changing active sentence to the passive sentence. In other word, the construction of the sentence is not according to the standard grammar of English.

The problem identifications of the fourth semester of English Department of STKIP Muhammadiyah Bogor are the students have lack of knowledge in grammar and they are still on the language habit in their mother tongue. The students do not master the grammar well, so they make some error in transforming active to passive sentence.

Based on the finding above, the researcher assumes that the students got the difficulties to transform the form of certain sentence to another form. Therefore, this research tried to identify and to classify the errors made by the students of the fourth semester at STKIP Muhammadiyah Bogor in transforming active to passive sentence. The researcher assumes that the research of error analysis is still needed in order to come closer to problem faced by the teacher and then the teacher can choose the better or even the best method and technique of teaching to which they should focus on.

The objectives of this research is to know the types of error that the students made by the fourth semester students of STKIP Muhammadiyah Bogor. In brief, by analyzing the students' error, the researcher do hope that this research can improve the effectiveness of learning process and get the solution how to minimize the students' error.

Research Methods

The type of this research is a qualitative research. The researcher uses descriptive qualitative method in this research. The researcher conducts the research to the Fourth Semester students of English Department in STKIP Muhammadiyah Bogor. The research had been conducted in March, 2016. The researcher used purposive sampling to collect the data by taking 8 students as the sample. Bailey (1994:96) states that in purposive sampling the investigator does not necessarily have a quota to fill from within various strata, as in quota sampling. Rather, the researcher uses his or her own judgment about which respondents to choose, and picks only those who best meet the purposes of the study.

In collecting the data, the researcher used triangulation. Moleong (2008:330) states that triangulation is a technique to check the data which use the other things to compare the result of interview toward the object of the research. The researcher used test items, interview technique, and documentation as the part of triangulation to get the data. The main instrument of this research is test items. The second instrument is interview. Bailey (1994:176) states that the interview is a special case of social interaction between two persons and as such is subject to some of the same rules and restrictions as other instances of social interaction. Interview

is used to classify the stage of students' errors based on Developmental Category. The last instrument is documentation. Bailey (1994:294) states that document study shares with observation the advantage that spontaneous actions or feelings can be recorded when they occur, rather than at a time specified by the researcher. The documentation is collected during the researcher conduct the research.

The first step that the researcher did to gain the data was by giving the test items to the students. The researcher asked the students to transform 20 active sentences into passive sentences. After that, the researcher analyzed the data. Then, the researcher conducted an interview for the students to get the information about their errors and their problems in transforming active to passive sentences. Documentation is used by the researcher to support the data and to avoid the data from the biases.

Finding and Discussion

Surface Strategy Taxonomy is used to analyze the data. Based on Surface Strategy Taxonomy, the researcher found 4 kinds of errors made by the students. They are omission, addition, misformation and misordering. The researcher has classified the students' errors based on the tenses that have been tested as presented in the table which is presented in the next page. The table shows about the classifications of the students' errors based on the kind of tenses in passive voice.

Table 1. The Classification of Students' Errors

No.	Tenses	Sentence's Formula	Students answers	Correct answers
1.	Simple Present	Active: S+V ₁ +O Passive: O+to be+V ₃ +by+S	Omission 1. The floor is swept every day. 2. The fairytale is told my grandmother. Misformation 3. The floor is <i>sweeped</i> by the servant. Misordering 4. The floor every day is swept by the servant.	1. The floor is swept <i>by the servant</i> every day. 2. The fairytale is told <i>by</i> my grandmother. 3. The floor is <i>swept</i> by the servant. 4. The floor is <i>swept</i> by the servant <i>every day</i> .
2.	Present Continuous	Active: S+TO BE+V _{-ing} +O Passive:	Omission 5. Is your house painted by Mr. Brown?	5. Is your house <i>being</i> painted by Mr. Brown?

		O+to be+being+V ₃ +by+S	6. Is your house being painted? Misformation 7. That report is being preparing by Alex.	6. Is your house being painted <i>by</i> <i>Mr. Brown?</i> 7. That report is being prepared by Alex.
3.	Present Perfect	Active: S+HAS/HAVE+V ₃ +O Passive: O + has/have + been + V ₃ + by + S	Omission 8. The door has opened by Tom. 9. Has those papers signed by Mr. Andrew? Misformation 10. Many bags had bough by she.	8. The door has been opened by Tom. 9. Has those papers <i>been</i> signed by Mr. Andrew? 10. Many bags <i>have been</i> <i>bought by her.</i>
4.	Simple Past	Active: S + V ₂ + O Passive: O + to be + V ₃ + by + S	Omission 11. I examined by lecturer yesterday. Misformation 12. Me was examined by my lecturer yesterday.	11. I <i>was</i> examined by <i>my</i> lecturer yesterday. 12. <i>I</i> was examined by my lecturer yesterday.
5.	Past Continuous	Active: S + to be + V _{-ing} + O Passive: O + to be + being +V ₃ + by + S	Omission 13. A letter was written by Achmad. Misformation 14. A letter was write by achmad.	13. A letter was <i>being</i> written by Achmad. 14. A letter was being <i>written</i> by Achmad.
6.	Past Perfect	Active: S + had + V ₃ + O Passive: O + had + been + V ₃ + by + S	Omission 15. The book had returned by Kathy to the library. Misformation 16. The book has been returned by Kathy to the library.	15. The book had <i>been</i> returned by Kathy to the library. 16. The book <i>had</i> been returned by Kathy to the library.
7.	Simple Future	Active: S + will/shall + V ₋₁ + O	Omission	17. My book will <i>be</i>

		Passive: O + will/shall + be + V ₃ + by + S	17. My book will borrowed by Jane. Addition 18. Ann is will be invited to the party by Bill.	borrowed by Jane. 18. Ann will be invited to the party by Bill.
8.	Future Perfect	Active: S + will + have + V ₋₃ + O Passive: O + will + have been + V ₋₃ + by + S	Omission 19. The announcement will be made by the president. Misordering 20. The announcement have will made by the president.	19. The announcement will have been made by the President 20. The announcement will have been made by the President

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the sample of this research did not master the tenses. Thus, they got the difficulties when they should transform the sentences from active sentence to the passive sentence. It can be seen that the students need to expand their understanding in grammar.

The students' errors in transforming active to passive voice are caused by some problems. First, the students have lack knowledge about tenses. They do not know clearly about the basic formula of the tenses in an active sentence. Therefore, they do not know how to transform the sentence into passive sentence correctly. Second, the students cannot decide which "to be" that should be used in transformation form (the formula of passive voice). Third, the students have low vocabularies, as the result, they cannot change the verb from present participle or participle into past participle correctly. In short, the students' knowledge about passive voice is still inadequate.

Analysis

Here are the total number of students' errors that have been found:

1. Omission : 126 (45%)
2. Addition : 18 (6%)
3. Misformation : 120 (43%)
4. Misordering : 16 (6%)

It can be seen from the finding that the highest frequency of errors dealing with the transformation sentence from active to passive sentence is omission which reaches almost a half of total number of error is 126 or 45 %. The other type of error that students made mostly is misformation which is exactly 120 or 43%. Addition takes the third position by accumulating 18 errors or about 6 % of total errors. Finally, the lowest type of error is misordering in which about 16 errors or 6 % of total errors. The explanation for each of errors can be explained as follows:

1. Omission Errors

There are some phenomena of omission errors made by the sample, such as:

a. Omission in the form of “ past participle”

This type of error is only made by a few students. The students omit the past participle in passive sentence. It might be happen because the students have lack concentration when they did the test.

b. Omission the word “by”

The students failed to add the word “by” in passive sentence before object pronoun. Some of them were forget to add the word “by”, so they directly write or add the object pronoun after past participle. Some of them did not know how to determine which the passive that should use a by-phrase or not. Therefore, some of them omit the word “by” and the object pronoun.

c. Omission the auxiliary verb “will” in future perfect tense transformation.

The other case of omission in future perfect tense occurs in the use of “will”. The data shows that the sample of this research missed to put the auxiliary verb when they transformed active sentence into passive sentence. As Indonesian language do not have the rule of tense like in English, this case may occur because the foreign language user need to learn more or become more familiar with English grammar.

d. Omission the form of “ to be”

In this case, most of the students omit “to be” in passive sentence. It is because they do not understand about the formula of passive sentence clearly. They thought that in transforming active to passive sentence, they only had to change the verb into past participle.

2. Addition Error

In this type of error, the students use “to be “after subject although there is another to be in the sentence. Thus, there is double “to be” in one sentence. Basically, the students still do not understand about the use of to be for appropriate tense.

3. Misformation Error

There are four phenomena of misformation errors made by students, such as:

a. Misformation of “verb”

Misformation of verb is made by the students because they failed to use the correct form of verb for appropriate tense and subject. The students did not use appropriate “verb” although they have changed the sentences into passive sentences. Some of them still use the verb of active sentence and some of them change the participle (V2) into verb base (V1). They did not change it into past participle correctly. The students got the difficulties to change the first or the second verb form to the third verb form. It occurs because their first language (*Bahasa Indonesia*) does not have irregular verb.

b. Misformation of “to be”

Misformation of “to be” is made by the students because they put incorrect copula which ungrammatically do not match the rule of English syntax. The

students used the wrong form of “to be” for plural and singular subject. The students also still have similar problem in choosing the correct “to be” for particular tenses.

c. Misformation of Object Pronoun

In this type of errors, the students did not change the subject pronoun to object pronoun. They still used the subject pronoun as the object pronoun.

d. Misformation of “auxiliary verb”

In this case, the students failed to use the correct auxiliary verb which appropriate with the tense. They have lack understanding about the form of tense (especially in perfect tense). Therefore, they got the difficulties in transforming active to passive sentence with the correct formula.

4. Misordering Error

Misordering error take the least frequent of error. Generally, the students made errors because they failed to arrange the correct order of the sentence. The students did not place the correct order of the word after subject, verb, object pronoun, and so on when they transformed active sentence into passive sentence.

Related to the source of error stated by Corder (1981), the errors of the students can be classified into intralingual transfer where the students get some difficulties because of the rule of the target language itself. The students are confused to use the different rule for each pattern. The students used one rule for another rule. They used the same rule for the entire pattern. It seems that the students tend to make errors that are caused by overgeneralization of the rule of the target language. Based on Brown's classification of error (Brown, 2000), these errors belong to intralingual transfer. This is caused by the student's knowledge. The students have lack knowledge about grammar, so they tend to make some errors in transforming active sentence to the passive sentence.

Based on the research, it can be said that some of the problems were caused by the differences of language elements between the students' first language and the language that has been learnt. It is normal that the foreign language learner will find some features of their contact with a foreign language. It can be pretty easy to be learnt or extremely difficult. The element which is similar to their native language will be so simple to be learnt while the element which is different will be so difficult. It might be easier to learn about the active and passive sentence in English if it does not require the change of some form or element.

It is normal if the students make some errors, especially the students who are learning English as a foreign language. In Indonesia, English is considered as the foreign language, not the second language meanwhile English is totally different from *Bahasa Indonesia* in terms of vocabulary, pronunciation, and sentence structure (grammar). Therefore, the students of fourth semester of STKIP Muhammadiyah Bogor still committed errors when they had to transform active sentence into passive sentence. Dulay et al (1982:138) said that making error is inevitable part of learning and people cannot learn without first systematically

committing error. It can be said that the students cannot really learn in the class without knowing when an error is made by himself or somebody else.

In short, the students' error is so usual and normal. The students can learn from the errors that have been made by them. And from these errors, the students are expected to make some improvements in the learning process. And as the teacher we should be smart to handle these phenomena so we can increase the students' mastery about their English ability.

Conclusion

Data taken in this research shows that the sample of this research still deal with errors in transforming active sentence into passive sentence. It is known from the result of triangulation that the sample of this research made 4 types of error. They are omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. The students need to enhance their understanding in English syntax. They have to understand about the pattern of active sentence and passive sentence.

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