

MENTAL PROCESS AS FACTOR THAT AFFECTS INTERFERENCE OF INDONESIAN INTO ENGLISH WRITING OF THE XIITH GRADE STUDENTS OF SMA NEGERI 1 KUPANG IN ACADEMIC YEAR 2017/2018

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ABSTRACT

This research focuses on mental process as factor that affects interferences of Indonesian into English writing. The method used in collecting data was triangulation containing three techniques; language assessment, interview, and observation. Data was analyzed by using typology. The result shows that students of SMA Negeri 1 Kupang in academic year 2017/2018 translated Indonesian into English inside their mind when they learned and did English composition. The mental process includes conceptualizing meaning, constructing Indonesian sentence, and translating Indonesian sentence into English. The main process is translation which consists of choosing vocabularies, applying tenses, constructing noun phrase, and constructing verb phrase.

Keywords: mental process, interference, translation, meaning.

INTRODUCTION

English has been taught in Indonesia since its independence. In other word, Teaching English as Foreign Language (TEFL) has come to seven decades. However, there are still a lot of challenges and problems to face both by teachers of English and learners. One of the obstacles encountered by teachers and learners is language transfer. Language transfer has some terminologies. They are first language (L1) interference, linguistic interference, and cross meaning.

Linguistic interference refers to speakers or writers applying knowledge from their native language to a second language (L2). Chaer and Agustina (1995: 158) define interference as the change of language system used in other element of language which is regarded as a mistake because it deviates from rules of language used. Language interference is also considered as an ‘intruder’ of a second language learning (Chaer, 2015: 261). The

term ‘intruder’ is used since L1 always appears in certain level of language and impacts the disorder in L2.

Linguistic interference is always found in every L2 learner including students of senior high school in Kupang city who learn English as foreign language (EFL). Citizens of Kupang are bilingual as well as senior high schools students. In view of the fact that the city dwellers of Kupang are multi ethnics, there are more than one language used in communication. They speak their local languages, Kupang Malay (KM), and Bahasa Indonesia (BI). Yet, KM and BI are the most frequent spoken language seeing as this language is operated in daily communication.

Cross meaning is identical to bilingualism (Weinreich, 1963). The transfer among languages happens if a person masters more than one language and or is learning a second language. Since there are languages in his mind, language contact occurs and mostly engages the knowledge of L1. This case is faced by senior high school students in learning EFL process. In case of language transfer, the result of L1 influence can be identified by observing English productive skills; speaking and writing of students.

These following examples of linguistic interference case in L2 learning are found in some English composition assignments done by a group of language students in a state senior high school in Kupang city.

(English) *In the past, when I am a child, I usually went to my grandmother's house together with my father*

(KM) *Dulu, waktu beta masih kacil, beta biasa pi nene pung rumah sama-sama dengan beta pung mama*

The above case point of linguistic interference can be perceived from the use of diction, sentence structure, tense, and expressed meaning in English sentence. The word and phrases in the brackets indicate as the results of Kupang Malay obstruction to the production of English sentence in case of composition. The phrase ‘in the past’ can be ignored as manner of

time of the event which in English is not efficient. The use of 'am' indicates inappropriate tense in English which is not found in KM. The same situation is also found in the phrase 'usually went' which actually means 'used to go' in English. The phrase 'together with' shows the use of literal translation of KM into English which is not oriented to the suitable orientation of meaning in English.

The obscurity of English sentence production as illustrated in the case above arises when learner processes the language in mind. This is regularly labeled as *encoding process* where someone administers language in his head involving grammatical, semantic, phonological, and morphological aspect of language. Consequently, this quandary has an effect on the progress of learning EFL indicated by English productive skills and mastery of ESL. The circumstance depicted by the instance above also occurs in speaking considering the *encoding process* results production of oral language.

METHOD

Since this was a qualitative project, the researcher considered applying triangulation in the process of collecting and validating data. This is also meant to validate the consistence of data. Setiyadi (2006: 246-249) defines triangulation as a combination of two ways or more in collecting data of behavior of research subject since human behavior is very complex. In specific, the researcher applied *method of triangulation* which consists of different methods in collecting the single data. There were three methods in obtaining data. They were classroom observation, interview, and test of writing.

The appropriate method in analyzing data of this project was *typology*. Patton (1987: 150) explains typology as a grouping system containing categories based on certain aspects. Typology in this research was defined as types of data that are divided based on the research problems. The first, levels of linguistic interference involving, morphology, syntax, and

semantics. The data collected in relation to problem one was categorized based on these three groups. Secondly, problem number two that consisted of the affecting factors of linguistic interference was grouped into some tentative categories like students' background, environment, classroom interaction, teacher's ability and education background, formal presentation including teaching and learning methods.

DISCUSSION

The analysis of research problem was based on finding that depicts general view of the students and their English writing (compositions). Figure (1) shows how students write in English.



Figure 1. Percentage of How Students Write in English

Figure (1) above provide information regarding how students do their English writing. This information was obtained based on the interview item found in questionnaire (appendix 1, point V, p. 107-108) which covers information and answer from the students related to their English writing. Students were asked about how they did their English writing in classroom. There were three kinds of answer provided in the interview of question “What do you do in writing English?” They are:

- a. “I translate from Bahasa Indonesia”,

- b. “I translated from Kupang Malay”, and
- c. “I directly write in English”.

This question was responded by students in three variations of answer. They are:

- a. “Bahasa Indonesia is the formal language used in school in communication including writing”
- b. “I usually write in Bahasa Indonesia in terms of school purposes”
- c. “I never use Kupang Malay or other languages but Bahasa Indonesia in writing at school”

Students were also asked to mention the difficulties and easiest ways in doing writing in English. For the question “What is/are difficulty do you find in writing English?”, students were offered four answer to choose. They are:

- a. English vocabulary
- b. Translation process of Bahasa Indonesia into English
- c. Translation process of Kupang Malay into English
- d. English grammar

They were also asked to choose the easiest way in English writing process and there were three options provided:

- a. Translate from Bahasa Indonesia
- b. Translate from Kupang Malay
- c. Directly write in English

Table 1. Difficulties Faced by Students in English Writing

| No | Aspects | Students | Percentage |
|----|---------------------------------|----------|------------|
| 1 | English Vocabulary | 25 | 100 % |
| 2 | Translate from Bahasa Indonesia | 18 | 72 % |
| 3 | Translate from Kupang Malay | 0 | 0 % |
| 4 | English Grammar | 25 | 100 % |

Table 2. Easiest Way Faced by Students in English Writing

| No | Aspects | Students | Percentage |
|----|---------------------------------|----------|------------|
| 1 | Translate from Bahasa Indonesia | 25 | 100 % |
| 2 | Translate from Kupang Malay | 0 | 0 % |
| 3 | Write directly in English | 0 | 0 % |

Table (1 and 2) above gives summary of information regarding the way students do their English writing.

Mental process, as it is drawn in figure (3) in previous section, refers to the process undergo by students in composing English sentence. This process involves *conceptualizing meaning, composing Indonesian sentence, and translating Indonesian sentence into English.*

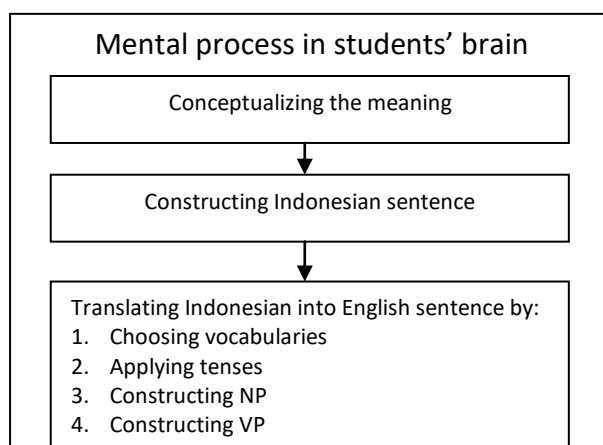


Figure 2. Mental Process in Student's Brain

The first step in mental process in students' brain is conceptualizing the meaning. It is true that meaning organization is the first thing to do and recognize before utterance (through oral and written form). In encoding process, meaning conceptualization is found in the first place. Thus, before speaking or writing everybody thinks about the correct meaning and then formulate it in language by considering grammatical and phonological form of language. If the encoding happens to written language, the form of message is in form of written text. In the process of decoding message, people will try to recognize sounds produced in encoding process and or written text, consider the grammatical structure of language, and then relate the meaning intended by the speaker or writer.

This mental process is undergone by both native of non-native speakers of a language. It can be imagined that errors may occur in this process for those who speak English as their mother tongue since the native speakers probably produce incorrect vocabularies or disorder grammatical structure. Moreover, this process is undergone by non-native English speaker like the students. They use English as their second language learning (LL2) or foreign language). They find it harder since they have to conceptualize the meaning and construct the sentence in Bahasa Indonesia and then translate it into English. This process takes much time and causes errors in physical process.

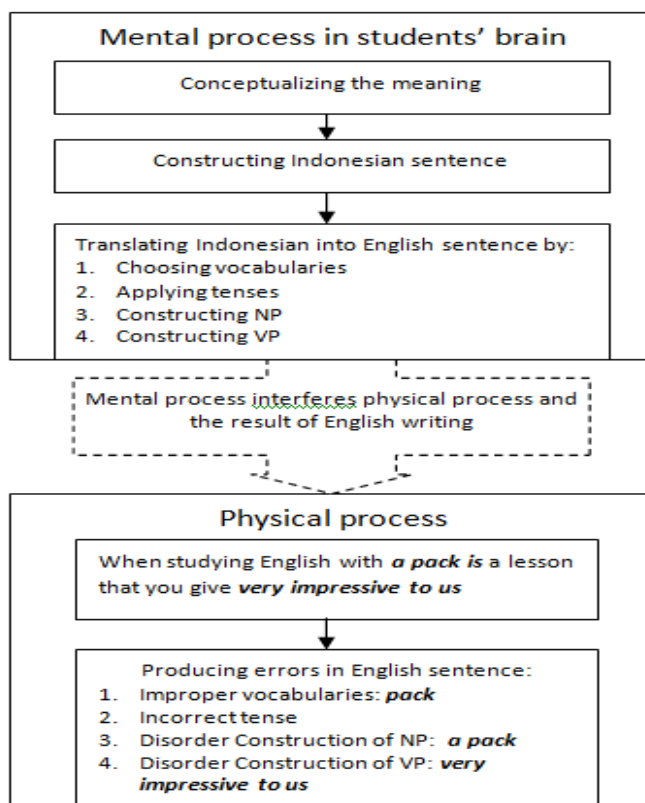


Figure 3. Example of Mental Process Interfering Students' English Writing

The mental process, for the students is harder to do because they do not think directly in English which will enable them in constructing English sentence, but think in Indonesian which demands transfer into English. This might be caused of under-supervision of English writing that needs further investigation to this matter.

CONCLUSION

Mental process, in English composition of students of SMA Negeri 1 Kupang, interferes how they write. All of the subjects admitted that translate Bahasa Indonesia into English when they do English composition. The data shows that the translation process happens in their brains. Therefore, this is called metal process. They do not use translation method in practical activity but inside their minds and then write it in English.

The interference that found was caused by consideration of students of Bahasa Indonesia and English which have the same characteristic as language learning. According to the students both English and Bahasa Indonesia are only taught at school. Thus, in mental process they translate bahasa Indonesia into English.

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