

Language Interference in English Language Learning in Indonesia

Aris Qudsi^{1*}, Evi Karlina Ambarwati²

Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Universitas Singaperbangsa Karawang^{1,2}

Email korespondensi: 2010631060155@student.unsika.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the language interference on English language learning on Indonesian students. Additionally, this paper discusses certain facets of the two languages -English and Indonesia- that may lead to some "errors" for both English language learners and speakers of Indonesian as a whole. In addition, the study attempts to use qualitative research approach. The data for this qualitative study were obtained from five students who had different backgrounds of English learning. Observation and interview were used as the research instruments to collect the data in this study. The results reflected that the students showed foreign language effects. The native language of the students, in this example, Indonesia, has been found to have certain linguistic features that set it apart from the target language, English, and are thought to have an impact on the acquisition of a second language. Grammar, pronunciation, and confidence are three of them.

Keywords: English, Learner, Interfere, First Language.



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INTRODUCTION

Everything that a language learner hears and observes throughout their life is included in the English language learning environment. It's common knowledge that learners first language has a big impact on how well they learn English. Similarities between the language a student is learning and their previous language make learning a new language easier for them; nonetheless, the distinctiveness of each language might make learning English more difficult. According to Dulay & Kreshan (1982), when a learner creates a target language, they transmit language structure and other characteristics from their first language, which makes it difficult for them to master the target language. Linguistically speaking, this is referred to as interference.

Interference is effect that is given by process of the other language learning because of learners' language background. Our first language serves as the basis for acquiring an understanding of the fundamentals of a foreign language (Careless, 2008). The subject of native language interference on the target language has already been the subject of extensive investigation. Therefore, our native languages refers to the language we naturally speak and from which the surface structure of our first language emerges while speaking the target language. However, speaking our native language can have both advantages and disadvantages.

Mede et. al (2014) stated that one way to think of the interference of the mother language is as a transfer that has both positive and negative effects on learning. It implies that while learning a second language, particularly English, there is a chance that students will make some blunders. There is evidence to support the theory that there is a significant likelihood of cross-linguistic effect during the learning of a second language, and that it may result in certain errors that are due to negative transfer.

Those explanation are the reason why the writer conducts this research. The purpose of this research is to find out if there is an language interference for Indonesians learner while they are learning English as a foreign language.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Mother Tongue

First language serves as the basis for acquiring an understanding of the fundamentals of a foreign language (Careless, 2008). The subject of native language interference on the target language has already been the subject of extensive investigation. Therefore, our native languages refers to the language we naturally speak and from which the surface structure of our first language emerges while speaking the target language. The characteristics that we should search for in the language learning process are the variations in mother tongues among individuals. However, speaking our native language can have both advantages and disadvantages.

Dinar, A, (2016) found that, when working in groups on the task, students demonstrate the activity by consistently using their native tongue rather than English. Their identity would come through the learning activity. Meanwhile, the interaction in English may be impacted by the detrimental effects of an over dependence on the first language.

Language Interference

In the process of learning a second language, cross-linguistic effect is very likely to occur, and this influence may result in some errors that are the result of negative transfer. Moreover, the most frequent forms of interference between the mother languages and the target language are mispronunciation and grammatical mistakes (Manrique, C. 2013).

A few theories regarding native language interference with target language are discussed. Interference is the automatic transfer of the first language's surface structure onto the surface of the target language as a result of habit, according to Dulay & Kreshan (1982). Interference is described as "errors in the learner's use of the foreign language that can be traced back to the mother tongue" (Lott, 1983). Interference is also described as "the influence that the learner's first language exerts over the acquisition of a second language" by Ellis in Bhela (1999). He contends that learners' perceptions of what is transferable and their stage of development in

second language learning control transfer. When learning a target language, learners create their own interim rules using their first language knowledge, but only when they feel it will aid them in the learning task or when they have become sufficiently proficient in the second language for transfer to be possible (Selinker, 1983).

RESEARCH METHOD

This paper examines the language interference on English language learning on Indonesian students. This study attempts to use case study with descriptive qualitative research approach. As stated by Nazir (2014), the descriptive research method is a method of researching the status of a group of people, an object, a condition, a system of thought, or a class of events in the present with the aim of making a systematic, factual and accurate description of facts, properties and relationships between the phenomena being investigated. The data for this qualitative study were obtained from five students who had different backgrounds of English learning. Observation and interview were used as the research instruments to collect the data in this study.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study was conducted to discuss certain facets of the two languages - English and Indonesia- that may lead to some "errors" for both English language learners and speakers of Indonesian as a whole. Here are the research finding and discussion of this paper.

Grammatical Errors

However, the majority of sentences in English have specific tenses that also have pattern exercises. The result from students' interview showed that most of them found it difficult to differentiate how to conduct a correct grammar sentence. For example, to have a sentence like this in English: '*kapan kamu pergi ke Bandung?*' they mostly answer with incorrect grammar like this; 'when you go to Bandung?'. While the correct grammar sentence for this is 'when do you go to Bandung?'. This case happen because in their first language, which in this case is

Bahasa Indonesia, they do not have any specific grammar or structure to conduct or using question sentence. This case is in line with Subiyakto and Nababan (1992), which stated that the most challenging part of English for Indonesian learners to acquire is reportedly the usage of tenses in phrases or sentences.

Pronunciation

The students who learn English are required to know and understand the sound system and pronunciation of the language. The result from students' interview showed that most of them found it difficult to differentiate and pronounce some similar words. For example, between 'I see a sheep' and 'I see a ship' since Indonesian language does not distinguish the pronunciation of the two vowels. Mispronunciation may be caused by spelling; and it may then cause a misunderstanding. This finding is in line with Nicholls (2003) which stated that the most often misspelled terms among native English speakers will barely coincide with a list of frequently misspelled words among non-native English speakers.

Confidence

In Indonesia, most of regular school and family do not use English as their first or second language on their environment. This case cause the students to be reluctant in using English as their second language. The result from students' interview showed that some of them are scared of making grammar and pronunciation mistakes because they are afraid that other people would might be judging they mistakes. Furthermore, commonly, Indonesian do not use English for daily speak. This can cause students to have lack confidence when they have to interact or speak using English. This is in line with the theory which stated that, In order to gain a better knowledge of language structure and communication, it focuses on examining the connections between language and society. When studying a single language, sociolinguistics is frequently overlooked as a crucial component. Sociolinguistics is "the study of language in relation to society," according to Hudson (1980; see also Wardhaugh 1988:12).

CONCLUSION

From the finding and discussion result, writer can conduct the conclusion about Indonesian students' interference in learning English. It can be concluded that there are three main point that caused this interference, they are; grammar mistakes, pronunciation, and confidence. Those are the cause of students' interference in learning English as foreign language. It is therefore suggested that the language produced by foreign learners (including Indonesian) is so unavoidably influenced, and even distorted, by the learners' mother tongue that it should rather be termed a "Interlanguage" (Selinker, 1971), since it will always be a blend of the foreign language and the mother tongue. It is possible that the Indonesian language, which differs from English in some aspects of rules and norms, will cause interference among students and other Indonesians who learn the language. That combination will be more diluted the better the learner is at overcoming language interference.

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