

## Interlanguage Analysis on Speech Produced by EFL Learners

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**Abstract** - Indonesian EFL Learners experience erroneous speech in the process of learning the target language. Interlanguage, the errors that contain linguistic features which neither belong to the first language (L1) nor the target language becomes the focus of this study. The study aims to analyze the native and target language influence on the interlanguage produced by the students in their speech production. This study was designed in qualitative research approach. The data was collected through interviewed of 20 eighth grade students in English using a guided interview technique that contains 15 questions. The oral responses produced by the students were recorded, identified, described, and explained. The results show that in the syntactic and lexicon levels, both native and target language influenced the students' interlanguage production. Native language influence includes 1) the use of Indonesian syntactic pattern; 2) the use of Indonesian acronym; 3) the use of Indonesian words; 4) omission of -s in plural forms; 5) omission of to be; 6) subject deletion; and 7) the use of verbs. Target language influence is observed in overgeneralization of articles, the use of to be, and the overgeneralization of ending -ed in the past tense.

**Keywords:** Interlanguage, Native Language, Target Language, Language Learners

### I. INTRODUCTION

Learning and mastering a foreign language for those who learn the language in a different setting is not an easy task to be done. In the case of English as a foreign language, the use of verb, preposition, and word class, for instance, is hardly understood by second language learners from various first language backgrounds (Sumonsriworakun & Pongpairoj, 2017). Whereas, Harmer (2001) believes that English is a *lingua franca*; thus, it is prominent to be mastered to be able to use it in any aspects in life such as to communicate, to get a job, etc., which will be helpful to survive the globalization era. Take an example, as Indonesian learners. It is difficult to master

English since the learners do not get enough exposure to the language input and not enough people who are native English speakers to practice with.

When learning a second language, the EFL learners' language production has a high possibility to be interfered by their first language (L1) (Adnyani, 2011). EFL learners are more likely to create a new system of language, which is different from their L1 and L2 (Aziez, 2016). The language they produce may be in a second language, but it follows the rules of the first language (Adnyani, 2011). Besides creating a new system of language, language learners also tend to mix both languages as a sign of lacking in English

proficiency (Purnamasari et al., 2016). Language learners tend to produce lexical items from two languages in one sentence (Hadisaputra & Adnyani, 2012; Purnamasari et al., 2016).

This phenomenon is known as interlanguage, which will be experienced by language learners in learning a new language. Interlanguage is an inevitable process that shows that language learners have progressed in learning language before they properly master the second language. Language learners' inadequate knowledge of the target language, their poor memory of the target language's system or pattern, and teachers' way of conducting language teaching may take part in influencing the language learners' error or interlanguage in producing sentences (Whardani & Margana, 2019).

Hosseini & Sangani (2015) stated that interlanguage is the process of learning a second language (L2), learners create a system that the language they produce is influenced by both their mother tongue and their target language. Selinker (1972) as the first linguist to propose the term interlanguage defined it as the features of language learners' first language (L1) and second language (L2) (Luna, 2010; Puspita, 2019; Ruegg, 2010). The concept of interlanguage is very influential when it comes to the study of second language acquisition ever since Selinker proposed this term in 1972 (Song, 2012). Further, Ellis (1995) believes that interlanguage happens in language learners at some points; this indicates the learners' progress in learning L2. Moreover, Corder (1967) also proposed a similar notion to interlanguage, which he called transitional competence. The transitional competence describes the linguistic ability of L2 learners that do not match the native speaker of the target language. Corder used the term idiosyncratic system to refer to language learners' unique language, and the rules they use are peculiar to both target and their native language (Song, 2012). Besides that, Corder (1967) defined the interlanguage as a grammatical system produced by language learners that can be changed or that it is temporary. In the other hand, interlanguage is an ill language system between the native language and target language's system which is gradually developed into the perfected target

language as the learning process continues (Afiana, Fauziati, & Nurkamto, 2018; Luna, 2010; Puspita, 2019; Whardani & Margana, 2019).

According to Selinker (1972), five psycholinguistic processes shape interlanguage in language learners. Those five psycholinguistic processes are: 1) native language transfer (borrowing patterns from mother tongue); 2) overgeneralization (extending patterns from the target language); 3) transfer of training (applying what language learners have learned from the instruction or textbooks); 4) strategies of communication (expressing meaning using words and grammar which are known by language learners); and 5) strategies of learning (a conscious attempt by language learners to master the target language).

The first psycholinguistic process is native language transfer. L2 learners make interlingual identification when they learn a second language (Dong, 2013). Odlin (1989) defined language transfer as the similarities and differences between the target language and the native language. Further, Richard & Schmidt (2002) said there are two kinds of language transfer, namely positive and negative transfer. The positive transfer makes learning the target language easier since both native and target language shares similar forms. For instance, in English as the target language, the word 'national' means *Nasional* in the native language (Indonesian). Meanwhile, negative transfer or known as interference, happens when learners use their native language' pattern, which produces an ill form in the target language. For instance, an Indonesian learner produces an English phrase: 'a rabbit slow' instead of 'a slow rabbit'. The Indonesian noun phrase pattern is a noun followed by adjective while English pattern is adjective before the noun.

Furthermore, by overgeneralizing the target language shows the process of L2 learners mastering the target language. It is because they begin to understand the general rules of the target language, but are not familiar with the exception to that rules (Dong, 2013). In this case, language learners tend to extend the use of a grammatical rule beyond its common use (Puspita, 2019). For example, the

language learners understand that past tense is shown by marker *-ed*. When learners add *-ed* to verbs (walked, talked, stayed, hitted, goed, dranked), it shows that they have mastered the rule of the target language, but they still need to learn the exception includes in the rules. Overgeneralization is committed may be influenced by the language learners' target language that they are familiar with (Puspita, 2019).

The other psycholinguistic process is transfer training in which the language learners apply the rule they learned from the textbook or the teachers. The fourth psycholinguistic process is strategies of communication happen when language learners want to communicate but do not know the exact lexical item to refer to it, they tend to do strategies of communication. For example, when they want to refer to a refrigerator in English but do not know the exact lexical item for it, they may describe it by referring it to 'a huge square thing to put food and drink to stay fresh and cold'. The last psycholinguistic process is strategies of learning which refer to the attempt of language learners to master the target language consciously. The example provided by Dong (2013) is that learners tend to use flashcards or memorize textbooks to remember the vocabulary of the target language.

Interlanguage is a common phenomenon that is inevitable in learning new languages. It triggered researchers to dig out some factors that might influence language learners' sentence production in the target language. Fauziati (2011), conducted an interlanguage study on Indonesian learners focusing on error fossilization-related issues and grammatical errors on language learners' writings. The result of this study was the learners' grammatical errors are dynamic and can be eliminated (are not fossilized). Then, Darussalam (2013) studied learning strategy and interlanguage errors by Indonesian students. It was found that there were 317 erroneous sentences produced by the students. Wrong learning strategies caused those errors by the students. The factors that influence errors are 43.53% overgeneralization of target language, 41.01% first language transfer, and 15.46% of oversimplification.

Al-khresheh (2015) conducted a review

study of Interlanguage Theory focusing on the Error Analysis and Contrastive analysis. The study reveals that interlanguage theory is no longer valid in second language acquisition for numerous reasons. Chachu (2016) did a study on errors made by French students. The study was done in a group of 100 students (18 to 20 years old) who had training in English and are comfortable using the language as communication. The result presents some errors in the oral and written production of the students in terms of the lexical, the limitation of vocabulary or expressions, conjugation in present tense and present continuous tense in English. Moreover, Fauziati (2017) in her study about native and target language influence on the EFL students' interlanguage production show that lexical and syntactical levels are the factor influencing students' interlanguage compositions. It is also revealed that students' native language dominantly influenced interlanguage compositions. Similar with Sumonsriworakun & Pongpairoj (2017) shows that systematicity occurred in the learners' English usage of prepositions of all types. It happened due to negative transfer from the learners' native language. Besides, the L2 learners tended to exhibit such systematicity irrespective of their English proficiency level.

Most of the researches were done by analyzing language learners' writing since it provides accurate data. Besides, learners' writing is chosen to be analyzed is because it gives more time and opportunity for learners to think thoroughly the sentences they are about to produce (Luna, 2010). Some researchers had done studies about learners' interlanguage in writing, for instance, Al-khresheh (2015) who conducted a review study of Interlanguage theory aiming at the role of interlanguage in learners' error in L2 acquisition. Another study was conducted by Chachu (2016) who studied French students writing composition to find the factor influencing the interlanguage.

The current study focused on analyzing the influence of native language/L1 (Indonesian) and the target language/L2 (English) in English speech production by junior high school students who have learned English as a foreign language for 5 years. Theory of Selinker (1972) and Ellis (1995) were used. While previous researches focused

on students' interlanguage writing compositions, this research is going to investigate the native and target language influence on the students' interlanguage production on their speech. Therefore, this present study aims to describe the types of native language influence on the interlanguage in the students' speech production, and to describe the types of target language influence on the interlanguage in the students' speech production.

## II. METHOD

This study was designed in descriptive qualitative method that focuses on the interlanguage experienced by the students in their speech. It explores the influence on both the native and target language on their interlanguage. The study was conducted in a state junior high school Singaraja in Bali Province. The subjects of this study were 20 students in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade of junior high students in Singaraja who have learned English as a foreign language for five years.

The data of the present study taken from oral responses of the students who have been asked questions in English. The students were asked 15 questions to be answered orally. The questions were designed to prompt the students to produce English speech that will be analyzed. In analyzing the data, the students' responses were recorded, identified, and described. The students' interlanguage were coded and classified based on the influence on native language or target language.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study tries to look at the interlanguage produced by Indonesian students learning English in their speech. Fauziati (2017) reveals that both the native language and target language take place in contributing to the students' interlanguage. In this study, both factors will be discussed in the interlanguage occurs in the students' English verbal responses.

### 1. Native Language Influence

The development of the second language or foreign language (target language) of the students may be interfered with by the students' mother tongue (Aziez, 2016; Darussalam, 2013; Fauziati, 2017). In this study, seven native language factors are found to influence the students' English utterance, namely 1) literal

translation from Indonesian (using Indonesian syntactic pattern); 2) the use of Indonesian acronym; 3) the use of Indonesian lexicon; 4) omission of -s in plural form; 5) omission of to be; 6) subject deletion; and 7) the use of verb 1 (V1) instead of verb 2 (V2).

The first type of language learners' native language influence is the use of literal translation by adopting the Indonesian sentence pattern. The students under study have been studying English since they were in the fourth grade of elementary school. It is expected that they have acquired adequate English vocabulary. Thus, they relied on their knowledge of English vocabularies and tried to use relevant vocabularies to convey the message they wanted to deliver. However, in constructing the English sentences, the students adopted the pattern of Indonesian sentence. Therefore, a considerable number of interlanguage involved during the process. The followings are examples of students' utterances where they apply Indonesian syntax pattern.

(1) I school with father.

NL: *Saya sekolah dengan ayah.*

(2) I school alone.

NL: *Saya sekolah sendiri.*

(3) Teacher favorite is Miss Muter.

NL: *Guru yang disukai adalah Miss Muter.*

They did use English in composing the sentences; however, the pattern they used was Indonesian pattern which is unacceptable in English. The word *sekolah*, which means 'school', in the Indonesian context, can be used in a sentence as a verb and noun. However, in the English context, school is a noun, and it cannot be used as a verb. The speakers meant to say that 'I go to school with my father' and 'I go to school by myself'. Instead, they used the word 'school' to refer to the verb 'go'. In the third example 'Teacher favorite is Miss Muter', the student uses the noun phrase 'teacher favorite' as in the Indonesian noun phrase construction where a noun is placed before an adjective. In English, however, noun occurs after an adjective. The use of native language pattern in target language production corroborates with findings of Brevik & Rindal (2019), Pardede (2012), and Littlewood & Yu (2009).

The next native language influence is the Indonesian acronym, such as *SMP* (junior high school), *SD* (elementary school), *IPA* (Natural



Science), and *IPS* (Social Science). Those Indonesian acronyms belong to education terms which relate to Indonesian's school curriculum. The example of Indonesian acronyms can be seen in example (4) until (6).

- (4) I went to *SD 3 Banjar Jawa*.
- (5) My favorite subject is *IPA*.
- (6) I now go to *SMP 6 Singaraja*.

To explain why the students replaced some words with Indonesian acronyms can be seen in several factors. They either do not know proper English terms equivalence to those acronyms in English, or the words do not exist in the target language. Thus, they use Indonesian acronyms which already bounded to them. It is in line with [Purnamasari et al. \(2016\)](#) who claim that stating that language learners tend to mix lexical items from L1 and L2 in one sentence.

Another native language influence is the use of Indonesian words. When the students were asked about their address, they often said as follows.

- (7) I live at *Perumahan Agung Persada*.
- (8) I live in *kampung*.
- (9) I like subject *senibudaya*.
- (10) My favorite is *prakarya*.
- (11) I go to school *jam enam*.
- (12) I like *Matematika*.

The words *Perumahan* and *kampung* are Indonesian terms referring to the area they are living. At the same time, *Matematika* 'Mathematics', *seni budaya* 'art and culture' and *prakarya* 'hand and craft' are school's subject terms and *jam enam* in English is six o'clock. These words can be categorized as specific Indonesian expression that the students are bounded to. It is understandable since the speakers might not be able to find the English equivalence for those words due to limited vocabulary. Thus, they had difficulty in translating those terms into English. This finding supports Fauziati's study who found that most native language influences occurred on vocabulary where students use Indonesian words or terms to replace the English terms.

The next native language influence is the omission of -s in the plural noun. From the conversation done with the students, the followings are the examples:

- (13) I have two brother.
- (14) I have two sister.

English and Indonesian have different plural markers. In English, a plural marker -s or -es is attached to the noun. In Indonesian language, on the other hand, there are no plural affixes attached to nouns. Instead of adding affixes, to mark plural form, the nouns are repeated such as *mobil-mobil* 'cars', *pohon-pohon* 'trees', *anak-anak* 'children'. Besides, in Indonesian to indicate plural form, in Indonesia is shown with the numbers preceding the noun or using words indicating amount as in *banyak anak* 'many children', *beberapa orang* 'several people'. In examples (13) and (14), the students did not attach any affixes to the noun as it is in the Indonesian plural construction.

Another native language influence is the omission of BE. Some of the examples can be seen in data (15) to (17).

- (15) My hobby play football.
- (16) Teacher name *Jero Surawan*.
- (17) My junior high school *SMP 6 Singaraja*.

In Indonesian syntactic pattern, to be (is, am, are, was, were) is not required in a sentence, whether the subject is singular or plural, nor the tenses used. However, the English pattern has a stricter rule in composing sentences. Be should be included when a subject is followed by a noun or an adjective or V-ing. Such construction does not exist in Indonesian. In Indonesian syntactic pattern, BE is not required, there is no BE form as can be seen in the following examples.

<i>Nama</i>	<i>saya</i>	<i>Made</i>
Name	I	Made
'My name	is	Made'

<i>Dia</i>	<i>cantik</i>
She	beautiful
'She is	beautiful'

<i>Ani</i>	<i>sedang</i>	<i>makan</i>	<i>pagi</i>
Ani	on	eat	morning
		process	
'An	is	having	breakfast'
i			

In the case of examples (15) to (17) the

students are influenced by the non-existence of to be. Subject deletion is another native language influence on students' interlanguage. Examples (18) to (19) show subject deletion in students' speech.

- (18) Last holiday stay at home.
- (19) With my mother to school.
- (20) With bicycle

A complete English sentence should at least consist of a subject and a predicate. It cannot be said as a complete sentence if the pattern produced by the speakers does not include a subject. However, in Indonesian colloquial, it is not necessary to put a subject to compose a sentence. In Indonesian colloquial, subject deletion is very common (Adnyani, Beratha, Pastika, & Suparwa, 2018; Sugono, 1991).

Next, the use of V1 instead of V2 occurs in the students' speech. In English, verbs can be classified into V1 (present), V2 (past), V3 (participle), and V-ing (continuous). The followings are the examples of students' speech where they replaced V2 with V1.

- (21) Last holiday, I stay at home.
- (22) Last holiday, I go to Bloom's Garden.
- (23) I go to *SD 1 Banjar Jawa*.

In examples (21) to (23) the students wanted to tell their activities or something that had happened in the past. However, they did not change the verb from present tense to past tense. In the Indonesian context, it is not required for the verb to be changed regarding the tenses. Whether it happened in the past, happening at the moment, habitual or will occur in the future, the verb is the same. In the English context, it is required to change the verbs depending on the tenses. English has a strict rule about verbs changes related to the subject and time. The students failed to understand those rules.

Native influence, in this case, the Indonesian language revealed in this study contains both lexical and grammatical aspects. It is line with study of Fauziati (2017) who observed EFL learners in the field of writings, this study confirms that the students' oral speech influenced by the native language, Indonesian resulting the interlanguage production. The lexical influence of the native language is related to terms that they face difficulties in finding the English equivalence.

Moreover, in grammatical aspects, the interlanguage is associated with the Indonesian syntactic pattern that they apply in their English utterances.

## 2. Target Language Influence

The target language also takes part in interfering the students' language use which caused the interlanguage. The influence of the target language is also revealed in this study. The finding in this study corroborates the research of Na-Phuket & Normah (2015) and Qaid (2011). The first target language influence is the addition of articles. The speakers tend to add an unnecessary article in sentences. It is due to their knowledge of the use of article 'the'. The article 'the' is added in the following examples that cause ill-form sentences.

- (24) I like the Mathematic.
- (25) I go to the *SD 1 Astina*.

The second target language influence is the addition of BE. The use of BE which is overgeneralized by the students are found in the following examples.

- (26) I'm go to school at 6 a.m.
- (27) Last holiday, I'm went to Buyan Lake.
- (28) I am like *IPS*.
- (29) I am live at Mayor Metra street number 49.

Contrary to the native language influence, where the speakers tend to think in Indonesian pattern, in this case, the speakers have an English pattern mindset where all the sentences should be added with BE. Thus, some students add BE in the sentences that they produced, which are incorrect in a particular context.

The third target language influence is the overgeneralization of the past form -ed. From the data collected, there are found several examples where the students used the past form -ed in verbs that do not require the form.

- (30) I goed to *SD 1 Banjar Tegal*.
- (31) Last holiday, I goed to Mc Donald.
- (32) I goed to Denpasar last holiday.

It can be said that the students know that they should add -ed at the end of the verbs. However, they fail to notice that the irregular form in English does not require the ending -ed. Thus, they used the rule of regular form -

ed and applied it in all verbs.

The examples from (30) to (32) show that students use 'goed' instead of went to state an event in the past. It is related to the students' knowledge in which they already understood the general rules in forming past tense in the target language but failed to understand the exception of the rule. It can be said that when the students add *-ed* in all verbs to refer to something they have done in the past, it shows that they have mastered the rule of the target language but in need to learn further about the exception of the rules in the target language.

Other studies that reveal the influence of target language in the students' interlanguage production were conducted by Fauziati (2017), Kaweera (2013) and Qaid (2011). Target language influence in this study is found in the grammatical aspects. It implies that grammar is one of the most challenging issues faced by the students in learning English.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

This research revealed that both native language or mother tongue (L1) and target language (L2) influenced the students' interlanguage production in speaking. The influence happened since the students have the knowledge and competence in their first language, Indonesian, and at the same time in the process of learning the target language, English. Thus, Indonesian and English are in the students' mind. The native language influence is found in both lexical and grammatical aspects. Meanwhile, the target language influence is seen mostly in the grammatical aspect. The students tend to borrow their L1's pattern and words to express their ideas in the English language because of the lack of English vocabulary and grammar competence they owned.

The native language influences found in this study are the use of Indonesian syntactic pattern, the use of Indonesian acronyms, the use of Indonesian lexicon, the omission of *-s* plural marker, the omission of BE, subject deletion, and the use V1 instead of V2. Influences of target language found are 1) the use of article, 2) overgeneralize of BE, and 3) the overgeneralize of the past form *-ed*. The result of this study only applies to the subject under investigation. It is not intended for generalization. It is suggested to do further research in EFL with other

participants' background.

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