

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations of the study. The conclusion section wraps up the study. The recommendation section presents the recommendation in relation to the teaching of writing and also to other researchers who are interested in interlanguage theory and realizations.

#### 5.1. Conclusions

The primary goal of the study is to investigate the interlanguage in regard to verb phrase acquisition that undergraduate students of English Education produce when they write English. There are two research questions as stated in the first chapter. The first research question is about what verb phrases that undergraduate students produce in their English writing. The second question is about what processes that contribute the students' use of verb phrases.

Regarding the first research question, the study finds that the students are able to produce the accurate productions of verb phrases. However, their productions evidence interlanguage. The total occurrences of verb phrases in their writings are 323 expressions, 200 of which (61.5%) are accurate or non-error expressions and the rest 123 (38.5%) are erroneous. The higher achiever students produced 127 expressions, 70 of which (55.1%) are non-errors and 57 (44.9%) are erroneous. Middle achiever students produced 114 expressions, 84 of which (73.7%) are non-errors and 30 (26.3%) are erroneous. Then, lower achiever students produced 82 expressions, 46 of which (56.1%) are non-errors and 36 (43.9%) are erroneous.

Based on analysis using Politzer and Ramirez' and Burt and Kiparsky's Linguistic Category Taxonomy focusing on verb phrase, the study finds that the use of third person singular verbs is the most frequent errors (28.5%), followed by omission of *to be* (17.9%), errors due to double marking (13%), the use of *have* and *has* (7.3%), problem with negative transformations (5.6%), verb-and-verb construction (5.6%), problem with gerunds (4.9%), disagreement of subject and

number (4.9%), problem in passive transformations (4.9%), problem with modals (4.1%) and problem with question transformations (3.3%).

While, based on the results of the analysis using acquisition criteria, it can be assumed that in general the use of verb phrases has not been acquired by all students since the correct use attains only 61.5% and the total errors reach 38.5%. Even though, the results of the analysis vary in terms of students' levels of proficiency. The higher achiever students have already acquired *the rule of the use of verbal after modals* and *subject-number agreement*. The middle achiever students have already acquired *the rule of subject-number agreement* and *the use of to be* (not to add *to be* in the structure where it is unnecessary). Then, the lower achiever students have already acquired *the rule of verbal after modals* and *the use of gerunds* (both after preposition and in front of the clause).

In addition, the results above lead the study to the limitation that students' proficiency levels do not influence the acquisition. It might be because the students' writing score can be considered as not sufficient to cover students' levels of proficiency. Hence, they seem to be in the similar stage of acquisition development since there is no big differences among the three groups in terms of the acquired rules or structures of verb phrases usage.

As stated in the second research question, the study also investigate the processes or causes of students' interlanguage. Based on Selinker's (1972) five central processes and Richards' (1971 & 1971b) sources of errors, the results of the analysis reveal that there are basically four processes that contribute to students' interlanguage, i.e. language transfer (67.5%), strategies of second language learning (16.7%), overgeneralization (2.6%), and false concepts hypothesized (13.2%). Based on this percentage, their target language seems to be partly influenced by their native language. A further contribution seems to be the students' internal processes in the form of their strategy in language learning, overgeneralization, and some errors caused by false concepts hypothesized.

What can be concluded from the findings of the study is that students' target language appear to contain errors because their language proficiency is not good enough for them to use this language. In order to fill the gap between inadequate proficiency and tough requirements of a task, the students use different strategies, such as native language transference, second language learning strategies, overgeneralization of target materials, and false concepts hypothesized, which cause different types of errors i.e. third person singular verbs, omission of *to be* and so on. Therefore, the students in each group have not acquired the principles of the target language completely. Their competence of English is considered to be interlanguage because their language production is neither target language nor their native

language. This is in line with Kil (2003) who claims that the errors they make show that they go through developmental process and their acquisition of the target language must be on the interlanguage continuum. To some extent, the present study supports that of Luna's (2010) study in that interlanguage provides a more comprehensive way of dealing with students' errors. They are not perceived as something negative but as a construction of their own process of learning.

## 5.2. Recommendations

There are several recommendations proposed concerning the research in the field of second language acquisition, namely interlanguage, and the teaching of writing, especially Writing for Academic Purposes in undergraduate studies.

Since the present study is not able to cover all syntactic elements due to its limitation, it is recommended that further studies analyse other syntactic elements, such as noun phrase, adjective phrase or adverbial phrase. Analysing the whole features of syntax also will give more comprehensive understanding of students' interlanguage. Moreover, morphological elements (i.e. the use of article, preposition, regular and irregular verb, etc) may also be worth investigating since students still potentially face difficulties in this area. Besides, as the present study is cross sectional, the more in-depth analysis through longitudinal study on students' second language development may also give another insight and understanding in regard to interlanguage development. Also, it is recommended to next researchers use more reliable test instrument when they have to group participants in a cross sectional study, such as TOEFL test and other valid and reliable instruments to measure students' level of proficiency.

For the teaching of writing, it appears that grammatical elements become important aspects to master by undergraduate students, notably those who are majoring in English Education. As evidenced in the study, most of students lack grammatical competence in that their writings contain a wide range of verb phrase errors. Thus, to some extent, the findings are considerably important for the lecturer to review her/his classroom instructions in order to overcome students' problem in producing English writings. As the processes or causes of students' interlanguage are mainly caused by students' native language, the lecturer may use some kinds of contrastive samples of writing and/or models in relevant contexts so that students can see what may differ between their own native language and the target language.