Fossilized Errors of English Morphosyntax Committed by English Graduate Students in Thesis Seminar Presentation at Universitas Negeri Padang

¹Sri Muliati
²Hermawati Syarif
³Jufrizal
Universitas Negeri Padang
Padang, Sumatera Barat
sriulya20@gmail.com

Abstract

The paper aims at discussing the kinds of fossilized errors of morphosyntax which occur in students' oral communication and to find out the most possible factors causing those errors. There were 10 English graduate students who held thesis seminar as the subject of the study. The data were collected from the students' utterances during their thesis seminar presentation which were recorded and transcribed then analyzed based on the indicators predetermined. To see the truthfulness of the data, the interview was done, especially to see the factors causing fossilized errors. The results show that 8 out of 10 subjects committed fossilized error and the frequent fossilized errors were manifested in using number marking *(taking singular for plural marking)* in noun/noun phrase category and *substitution of the simple present for the simple past tense,* the use of *voice, agreement and nominalization.* These fossilized errors were due to the Indonesian language interference, pedagogic intervention, and lack of opportunity to use English. Based on the result, it is recommended that the lecturers pay serious attention to the language usage in preparing effective writing instructional design.

*Key words***:** *Error analysis, fossilized error, morphosyntax, interference, speaking.*

A. INTRODUCTION

To be qualified in English, the students need to be especially and purposefully trained in English skills. Being able to speak skillfully takes the most important role. Through speaking, a learner can communicate with others to achieve certain goals or to express their opinions, intentions, hopes, and viewpoint. In addition, people who know a language referred to speaker of that language. Being proficient in English is being able to speak English fluently and accurately (native like competence).

Mastering speaking is the single most important aspects of learning a second or a foreign language, and success is measured in term of ability to carry out a conversation in the language. Unfortunately, being able to speak skillfully, fluently and accurately are not easy. Learners should have some important sub-

skills of speaking such as accent/pronunciation, grammar (morphology and syntax), vocabulary, fluency and comprehension. These components are crucial to be mastered and integrated in speaking. Using the correct grammar in speaking is important to avoid misinterpretation about the messages being conveyed.

As academic practitioners, English graduate students have to master grammatical rules (morphology and syntax). Chomsky in Aronof & Fudeman (2011) says that language is a set of sentences formed in logical syntactic structure or combination. Thus, the learners should comprehend the sensitivity of grammar (morphology and syntax). The students and teachers need to be aware of grammatical features of English, especially pedagogic grammar. The awareness is really needed because they will be teachers and model of EFL later. The students-teachers should have linguistic and communicative competence in English in order to be able to transfer the grammatical knowledge and model the language skills to their students (Jufrizal and Refnita, 2013). Moreover, the linguistic competence and communicative skills support their success as professional teachers, then.

In accordance with grammar (morphology and syntax), morphology is the linguistic branch that deals with word formation, the internal structure and how they are formed (Aronoff & Fudeman, 2011:2) whereas syntax is the study of rules governing the way words and combined to form sentences (Finch, 2000: 77). In relation to morphosyntax as the main case being discussed, American Heritage Dictionary and Payne (1997:32) define morphosyntax as the study of linguistic units that have both morphological and syntactic properties definable by both morphological and syntactic category. It means that morphosyntax encompasses linguistic strategies and operations to represent syntactic features via morphological marking as opposed to merely combinatorial or syntactic strategies. It is the study of morphological and syntactical units that is required by a specific syntactic context. In morphosyntactical study, morphology and syntax is regarded as an interlinked feature. In other words, analysis of morphosyntactic error does not mean analyzing the errors of each property, but both of interlinked properties. It deals with the use of nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs which each category exhibits many properties.

The indication found in the preliminary research showed that the students faced problems dealing with morphological and syntactical elements and the most problematic element dealt with syntactic properties. It cannot be denied that transferring Indonesian language to English commonly leads the students to produce various kinds of grammar errors. Syarif (2014) states 'the use of correct grammatical patterns of the language is the result of positive transfer'. This transfer fortunately leads people to understand and catch the meaning of interaction occurred. On the other hand, whenever the misuse of rules happens in the implementation of using language, the problems arise as the result of negative transfer. It is in line with Jufrizal and Refnita (2013) who state that learners of EFL in Indonesia are frequently confused by the grammatical features and language typology which are mostly different from those national language (bahasa Indonesia) and mother tongue (local languages in Indonesia). Therefore, the problems and difficulties faced by EFL learners in Indonesia may come from linguistic and cultural differences.

The errors as the result of negative transfer might become permanent errors since English is a foreign language in Indonesia. The chance to notice the errors are limited because English is not used in daily communication but only for specific purpose with limited people and situation. The chance for the errors to fossilize is greater.

There are some categories of errors. Chomsky (1965:28), a classic theory, divides errors into two categories: *error of performance* and *error of competence*. *Performance errors* means the errors which are caused by external causes such as fatigue and carelessness though the learners know the language rules. Meanwhile, *competence error* is the errors which occur due to the learners do not master the language system. In accordance with those ideas, both of those types were committed by the students.

Moreover, error can be classified into several types, but different language teaching experts or educators might use different or the same term in classifying them. Duley et al (1982:154-162) divide them as errors of *addition, omission, substitution* and *ordering*. This theory is also called *surface structure category*. The morphosyntactic errors in this research were analyzed based on the classification proposed by Duley et al (1982). He states that omission is

characterized by the absence of an item that must appear in a well formed utterance like *"I went to movie'* or *"He teach English". Addition* is the opposite of *omission* which is characterized by the presence of an item which must not appear in a well formed utterance. *Substitution* or *misformation* is supplying something although it is incorrect while *misordering* is incorrect placement of a morpheme or group of morphemes in an utterance. In fact, the errors result from the all-too-faithful use of a certain rule. Those errors may lead the students to fossilization.

Grammar error is a big matter because it reveals students' proficiency, especially since the errors cause misunderstanding in communication. The more fluent they speak, the more recognizable the fossilized morphosyntatic errors they commit. In particular, most of the graduate students have good fluency in speaking but weak in accuracy. Consequently, the students who had tendency in ignoring grammar accuracy are indicated committing fossilized errors more easily.

Fossilization is the phenomenon occurs in interlanguage process. Johnson (2004:40) says the notion of fossilization is addresses to the learners who reach certain level of language acquisition but cannot avoid keeping certain errors that cannot be surpassed no matter how hard they try to overcome it. Similar to Johnson's idea, Richard (2008) defines fossilized error as errors which are *permanent* and *stable*. Fossilization is the error that appears to be entrenched and difficult to eradicate, despite the teacher's best effort. Thus, fossilization represents unchangeable errors.

In accordance with those views, Lakshmanan and Selingker (2001) states that 'no matter the learners are second language learners, third language learners, or foreign language learners, whenever they learn a new language, they cannot prevent themselves from committing fossilized errors'. Therefore, fossilization is an attribute of second or foreign language learners. Thus, graduate students who have already studied English for years at university cannot avoid themselves from producing fossilized errors.

In fact, such errors are described as already fossilized, as it become permanent features of the students' written or spoken language that has not been corrected during teaching and learning process occur. The earlier errors are the serious

matter to be emphasized because it remains the learners' memory that leads to fossilized errors (see Myers and Scotton, 2006:358). It means that whenever the errors are undetected earlier, it would be difficult to be change due to the learners have an automatic habit to commit errors. Consciously or unconsciously, the fossilized morphosyntactic errors can be persistent on the graduate students' spoken language production which is difficult to change. Whereas, the graduate students in this program are advanced English learners, teachers and lectures who keep in touch with teaching and learning process yet a few of them have good English accuracy.

The learners who commit fossilized errors tend to produce persistent errors though they know the language system. Huang (2009:76) found in his study that foreign language learners who learn English with specific purpose have limited interaction. For them, the development are cease even a serious effort to change are often useless. Even though they notice their mistake the learners could not change their habit of committing the errors. After reaching the end stage of learning, the learners' proficiency even got worse or backslides where the opportunity to correct the errors is impossible.

Moreover, errors become fossilized as they have permanently established in the IL of second or foreign language learners in a form that is different from the TL norms, which continues to appear in performance regardless of further exposure to the TL (Hinkel, 2005: 456). Besides, the fossilization errors that the students make every time they speak inside/outside the classroom context when interacting with native/nonnative speakers of English turn out to be bad habit, which very difficult to get rid. Furthermore, fossilization deals with ages. Wei (2008) states that fossilization as a mechanism that underlies surface linguistic material which speakers will tend to keep in their IL productive performance, no matter with the age of the learner or the amount of instruction he receives in the target language (TL). In accordance with those ideas, Schwartz (1997:24) states that 'most adults never master a foreign language and their development often lead into permanent error 'fossilization' pattern that no teaching or correction can undo'.

In short, fossilized errors define as deviations that are difficult to acknowledge or to be fixed by the students as they become fossilized and remain incorrect in

the students' oral production for almost in a long period of learning and using English. Fossilization errors can be seen in the use of non-native grammatical construction, strong foreign accent, and wrong interpretation of certain types of sentences. In this case, only successful learners will not fossilize.

The existence of fossilized errors is due to many reasons. It cannot be denied that the influence bahasa Indonesia system while speaking English plays as the prominent cause in this case. It is in line with Syarif (2014) who states that mother tongue interference occur in such grammatical elements, such as lexicon, morphological, and syntactical elements in which the students hardly differentiate the use of some English words into the right context of their sentences. English rhetoric system is very different from the rhetoric of Indonesian language or other languages. Moreover, English has complex grammatical rules that sometimes ignored while speaking. It becomes a gap that often leads the students to produce errors frequently. Besides, pedagogic intervention, lack of opportunity to use English, lack of self-monitoring and motivation also contribute as the causal factors of fossilization.

There are some causes of fossilization. First, it is caused by the presence or absence of internal motivating factors. Second, it is because seeking interaction with other people where the students imitate the language skill through interactions with others. The third cause of fossilization is because of consciously focusing on form for the students focus on how the information to be accepted. The last cause is because of the student's strategic investment in the learning process for there is an internalization of some strategies that are inappropriate for other items (see Brown, 2000:233).

Han (2004:28-19) explains the factors of fossilization in more detail. She clearly explains that fossilization occurs because of some categories: *environmental, cognitive, neuro-biological,* and *socio-affective categories.* She states that both external and internal factors contribute to fossilization whereas within the internal factors we can differentiate between cognitive, *neuro-biological* and *social-affective* ones. Furthermore, Wei (2008:128:127) briefly concludes the causal factors of fossilization error. He states 6 factors of fossilization. Those are language transfer, training transfer, learning strategy,

communication strategy, overgeneralization, and others *(environmental, cognitive, neuro-biological, and socio-affective).*

This paper discusses the fossilized morphosyntactic errors committed by English graduate students of Universitas Negeri Padang (Padang State University) in thesis seminar presentation. It aims at finding (1) the types of morphosyntactic errors being fossilized, (2) the fossilized morphosyntactic errors the students committed, and (3) the prominent causes of fossilized errors of English morphosyntax committed by the graduate students of UNP.

B. RESEARCH METHODS

This research used descriptive research method since it is related to natural phenomena in language learning. Iskandar (2009:61) points out that descriptive research is a systematic and subjective approach in describing phenomena or social phenomena in the field and understanding those phenomena as detail. In addition, Gay, Mills and Airasian (2011:395) emphasize that descriptive research aims to understand what is happening and why.

The research was conducted at graduate English Education Program at Universitas Negeri Padang. The subject of this research was 10 English graduate students of Universitas Negeri Padang who held thesis seminar in October 2016. It used purposive sampling in which the number of the subjects of this research was determined on the terms and saturation of the data. If the information obtained from the respondents is the same, it is enough for the data collection process.

There were some instruments used in this research which the key instrument was the researcher since she was involved directly in the process of the research. The data were collected from the students' utterances during the thesis seminar presentation and its discussion which were recorded and transcribed. Then, the data were analyzed based on the indicator predetermined. Interview was done to the students with fossilized errors to reach the truthfulness of the data, especially to find the factors causing fossilized errors.

Since the researcher wanted to find out the categories of morphosyntactic errors and fossilized morphosyntactic errors in speaking, the data in this research were firstly analyzed quantitatively. In this research, the researcher considered that errors are fossilized if the number of the errors produced is greater than the

correct ones. In this case, the deviation of the number is 5. In addition, the repeated errors could be categorized into fossilized errors because the students produced the same errors repeatedly. Moreover, they have been supervised by the advisors during writing their thesis. They are supposed to get grammar correction by the advisors but the repeated errors occurred in their oral communication and difficult to be vanished.

In identifying the errors, the incorrect words/phrases/clauses/sentences were highlighted, defined and classified. The errors of nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs were classified into *omission, addition, misformation/subsitution, and misordering* type. The last step is drawing conclusion based on the analysis. In order to get the prominent errors the students committed, the researcher used Sudijono's formula (2003:40) as follow:

$$P = \frac{f}{n} \text{x } 100\%$$

P = the percentage of the students' error
f = the frequency of the students' error
n= total number of the students' error

Since it was a descriptive research, the terms of validity and reliability of the instruments and data were known and defined in the term of truth worthiness. In order to get the valid transcriptions, the researcher had a validator, Eka Wilany, M.Pd (an English lecturer of Universitas Negeri Riau Kepulauan) to recheck the transcriptions of the students' utterances during the seminar. In addition, the researcher involved another validator for data analysis. He is Hanafi, S.S., M.Appling, Ph.D, a linguistic lecturer at Andalas University.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. The Types of Fossilized Error of English Morphosyntax

The findings of this research show the students' problems in each category of morphosyntax. They produced various kinds of morphosyntactic errors. Among 4 properties of morphosyntax (nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs), only the use of nouns and verbs were manifested as fossilized errors. The number of the occurrence of adjectives and adverbs in the students' language production also influenced the result. The fossilized errors were commonly found in the forms of

omission and *misformation/substitution*. The category of the occurrence of fossilized errors can be seen in the chart below:
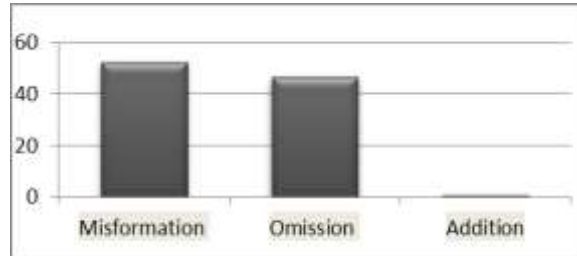

Chart 1: The Types and Percentage of Fossilized Morphosyntactic Errors

The chart represents the prominent category in which the students tend to commit fossilized errors, no matter how many errors they committed. As what stated above, *misformation* and *omission* were the errors which dominantly occurred in the students' oral communication. *Substitution/misformation* took 52.4%. It was followed by *omission* errors (omitting inflectional forms) which manifested 46.7% of the total fossilized errors. *Addition* error manifested as the least number; 137 among 1328 fossilized errors (0.9%). Of course, the frequency of the appearance of each category gives significant effect to this percentage. Due to this research investigated the thesis seminar presentation; the utterances used were dominantly in simple past tense to report the research process and results. Thus, incorrect use of tense became the prominent errors the students committed. Besides, they overgeneralized the use of morphosyntactic rules which then bought them to fossilization. It is important to notice in which category the students often lead to fossilization in order to find the effective teaching-learning grammar which becomes a core program of language department.

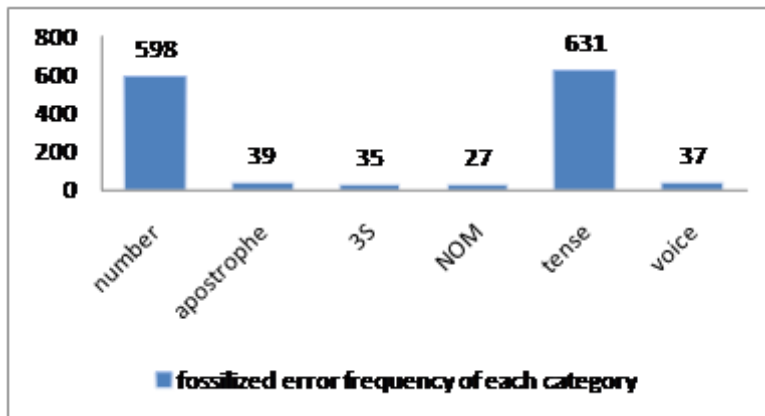## 2. *The Fossilized Error of English Morphosyntax*

In this research, the fossilized errors of English morphosyntax committed by the students were analyzed by the surface changes taxonomy. As what explained before, the classification of the data was based on the theories proposed by Politzer and Rominez (in Duley, Burt and Krashen, 1982) and Payne 1997 as well as the related theories about errors. This research investigated 4 categories of

English morphosyntax. They are noun/noun phrase errors, verb/verb phrase errors, adjectives, and adverbs. The deviations of noun category include the incorrect use of *articles*, *number, pronouns, case marking,* and the use of the *noun* itself. Then, the error in the verb phrase category includes errors in *agreement* of subject and its verb or object, *verbs as predicative functions, verbs as subject of the clause/sentence, verbs as verb marking morphemes, verbs exhibiting status, aspect, mode, verbs as the head of verb phras*e, and *tenses*.

The presenters who were observed mostly made fossilized errors in morphosyntax of nouns. There were several errors committed toward criteria of *distributional* and *structural properties* (morphological and syntactic studies) of nouns. Mostly, the students committed errors of nouns in the aspect of their ability to exhibit *number*, namely *taking singular and plural markers*. In this research, most of subjects committed fossilized errors of number marking (taking singular for plural marking). The errors occurred by omitting plural marking *–s/-es* and *addition* plural marking *–s/-es* for singular nouns. In this case, *omission* of plural marking *–s/-es* was the error that most frequently occurred.

Secondly, errors of morphosyntax of verbs made by the students were misformation of *agreement* with subjects and its verbs/objects, *misformation* of verbs as the subject of the clause/sentence, and *omission* of inflected morphemes *–s/-es* of verbs for subjects of the third person singular (*he, she*, and *it*). Moreover, because the presenter reported what they did during the research process, they should use simple past tense. In contrary, most of the students who had research result seminars did not use simple past tense in reporting their research result. Thus, the researcher calculated every single word, phrase, clause and sentence which was not suitable with the tense as an error.

Moreover, the presenters also committed errors in verbs exhibiting *voice*. 7 out of 10 students committed errors in constructing passive voice and *substitution* of active for passive voice. In this case, 2 of them committed fossilized errors. The errors were in the forms of *misformation* of constructing passive voice and using active voice for passive voice. Furthermore, there were no fossilized errors of adjectives and adverbs found in this research. The students over generalized the use of adjective and adverbs. Those fossilized errors which were committed by 8 students were summarized in the chart below:

Note: 3S = Third Singular Verb
NOM = Nominalization

Chart 1: The Frequency of Fossilized Morphosyntax Errors the Students Committed

The chart describes the types of fossilized errors of English morphosyntax that the students committed which were persistent over time, and thus, tend to become fossilized in spite of pedagogic interventions. It can be seen that inflectional forms of nouns in the term of *nouns exhibiting number* was manifested as greatest number (598 times) occurring in the students' oral language production.

Based on the data that have been collected, the researcher encountered that errors of nouns occurred in several categories. Among 16 types of errors which were provided in the indicators consisting of 12 types dealing with structural properties (*morphological studies*) and 3 types dealing with structural properties (*morphological studies*) and 3 types of distributional properties (*syntactical studies*), 9 types of errors of nouns were found in the students' utterances. The errors consist of 3 types of distributional properties (*syntactic studies*) where nouns servings as heads of noun phrases, subjects of clauses and object of clauses and 5 types of structural properties (*morphological studies*).

The errors of nouns occurred in all categories of nouns which only 2 of them were fossilized. Those are the use of nouns with *number marking,* and *nouns exhibiting case marking*. The errors were in the forms of addition, omission, and substitution. The detail data of each type of fossilized error the students committed can be seen in the table below:

Table 1: Distribution of Fossilized Errors of Nouns in Each Seminar

Occurrence of Errors / Types of Errors	Error Distribution in Each Seminar										TOTAL	
	PI	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	N	SS
Noun												
1. Number												
1.1 Omission of –s ending for plural marking	42	68	116	-	-	32	56	76	128	29	**547**	8
1.2 Substitution of plural for singular			12	-	-						**12**	1
1. Case Marking												
2.1 Omission of -s' for possessive case		9		-	-				30		**39**	2
TOTAL	112	77	175			32	75	96	205	29	**598**	

It can be inferred from the table that all students who committed fossilization (8 students) were fossilized in inflectional nouns. They substituted singular for plural and vice versa or making errors by omitting or adding plural making –s/-es. The errors above showed that the students were not able to produce automatically changed singular nouns for plural ones and vice versa. The researcher considered a singular noun word as an error if it was supposed to be the plural one. Furthermore, most of the presenters in this research committed fossilized errors in *pluralization forms*. 7 students faced fossilization errors in nouns exhibit number marking. They persistently omitted suffix –s for plural marking and 3 students over generalized its use. They produced many incorrect sentences in this case.

The other fossilized errors are in omission of apostrophe –'s/-s' for case marking/possessive case which were less dominant occurring in the students' oral language production. Nouns exhibiting case marking were one of the categories which lead the students to fossilization.2 out of 10 students/presenters committed fossilized errors of case marking. They omitted the possessive morpheme/apostrophe (-'s/-s'). Case marking means nouns show possession. Nouns can occur with the possessive morphemes (...-'s) which is used for the singular and nouns can occur with the possessive morpheme (...-s') for plural ones.

Another property of morphosyntax is verb. The errors of verbs showing agreement between subject and verb were mainly executed by the students.

Among 14 types of errors of verbs provided in the indicators, 10 types of errors of verbs which 4 of were fossilization errors. The following table displays the errors:

Table 2: Fossilized Errors of Verbs

No	Types of Morphosyntactic Errors of Verbs	Frequency	Fossilized	
			Yes	No
1.	Verbs serving as heads of verb phrase	8		√
2.	Verbs serving as predicates of clauses	44		√
3.	Verbs exhibiting agreement between subject and verb	189	√	
4.	Verbs exhibiting tenses	647	√	√
5.	Verbs exhibiting aspect	10		
6.	Verbs exhibiting status	10		√
7.	Verbs exhibiting modal	25		
8.	Verbs exhibiting voice occurring with past participle *(be+past participle/have/s/d+past participle)*	77	√	
9.	Verb having verb-marking morphemes/derivational affixes	46	√	
	Total	**1056**		

The table reveals that fossilized errors of verbs were manifested in the category of verbs exhibiting agreement between subject and verbs which was omission of suffix –s/-es for third lexical verbs, verbs exhibiting tense (substitution of the simple past for the simple present), verbs exhibiting voice, and verbs having verbs marking morphemes/nominalization. The detailed data of the occurrence of fossilized errors of verbs can be summarized in this table:

Table 3: Distribution of Fossilized Errors of Verbs the Students Committed

Occurrence of Errors / Types of Errors	Error Distribution in Each Seminar								TOTAL	
	P I	P II	PI II	PI V	PVI I	PVI II	PI X	P X	N	SS
Verb										
Omission of suffix -s/-es	1 2	9 1 3 5 3 2 2	14 14 16 4	12 0 15	118	80	65	3 1	**35 27 63 1 37**	3 2 3 7 2
Misformation of verb as the subject/object (NOM)										
Subs of the simple present for the simple past										
Misformation of passive construction										
TOTAL	1 2	9 7	19 2	13 5	118	80	65	3 1	**73 0**	

PX=Presenter code   N= Total   SS=student

The table shows that substitution of the simple present for the simple past dominantly occurred in the students' language production. All of the students who fossilized in this case had research result seminar which need to use simple past tense.7 (70%) students were fossilized in this case. Moreover, 3 students (30%) committed fossilized errors of agreement of subject and its verb. The fossilized errors were derived from overgeneralization errors which turned to fossilize.

Based on the transcriptions of the students' utterances, many of them committed errors on subject-verb agreement. All of the students being investigated in this research omitted –s/-es for verb inflected forms. 7 out of 10 students produced overgeneralization errors of this category and 3 of them committed fossilized errors.

Furthermore, due to its complexity, most of the students/presenters who made many errors in verbs exhibiting tense. 7 out of 10 students committed fossilized errors in tenses use. Problems and difficulties on understanding the tense and aspect may become more serious if the language learners, whose mother tongue languages are tenseless language such as Indonesian students. They are assumed to have pedagogical and psychological problems and difficulties in understanding and using appropriate tense and aspect in communication (Jufrizal, 2014). A sensible look at the errors made by the students lead the researcher to identify that almost most of verbal errors were due to the interference of mother tongue language (Indonesian language). The major structural difference of Indonesian language and English such as the use of linking verb, difference among simple past, present perfect and perfect tenses lead to major errors by the students.

In addition, 2 students committed fossilized errors in the use of voice. They failed to produce the grammatical sentences in the form of passive voice. Some students made errors by substituting active for passive forms or vice versa. The most common error of verb exhibiting voice was in the first form of passive which the students used to omit *be*, produced incorrect passive construction, and substituted the use passive voice in the forms of simple present and simple past tense.

Related to this case, Jufrizal (2014) found in his research that academic factors caused the appearance of grammatical problems in passive construction. It

seems that less serious attention on grammatical features in teaching and learning process of English grammar at the graduate program, lack of communicative exercises, and the learners' tendency to focus more on what to communicate rather than how to construct grammatical sentences for that purpose become academic problems causing the grammatical problems.

Moreover, a few students made errors of verbs having verb-marking morphemes **(nominalization).Nominalization** is changing a verb into a noun. Most of the students tended to ignore nominalization rules. They mostly omitted suffix *–ing* to form nominal sentences. In accordance with this rule, 2 out of 8 students being fossilized committed fossilized errors as the students habitually produced this kind of errors at the moment of speaking.

Considering the students' problems and fossilized errors in morphosyntax, let's say grammar, language awareness is crucial to build and strengthen grammatical competence. The students need to be fully aware of the sensitivity of grammatical rules in speaking. The students should minimize their errors and maintain their linguistic and grammatical competence in order to be able to produce grammatical English utterances.

3. The Prominent Causes of Fossilized Errors the Students Committed

Mother tongue (Indonesian) interference is the most fundamental problem. It interferes English in such a way that gives a serious impact to the language produced. Moreover, English has complex grammatical rules by its tenseness that sometimes ignored while speaking. It becomes a gap that often leads the students to produce errors frequently. As a tenseness language, English grammatically constructs tense, aspect and modality sentential constructions in different ways compared with those of bahasa Indonesia and most of local languages in Indonesia which belong to tenseless languages (see Jufrizal, 2014). Hence, the students often produced twisty sentences and forget the rules of inflectional morphology.

In Indonesian language, nouns are not exhibited by number. So do verbs. There is no tense in Indonesian. Those are the causes why *substitution* and *omission* were commonly found in the students' spoken language production as stated by Leung (2009:144) that 'first language can cause persistent fossilization if first language features do not match to second or foreign language features'.

The way to modify nouns and arranging sentence in English is not consistent as the way to arrange nouns/nouns phrases and sentences in Indonesian language. Thus, since students learn English, while their first language does not match, the interference from Indonesian language features cannot be avoided. The students often commit substitution and omission errors due to its different system.

Errors of nouns mostly occurred where nouns exhibit number which can occur with the plural morphemes. It is in line with verbs showing subject-verb agreement with number of subject. In this research, this type of error became the most frequent fossilized errors which occurred in the students' language production. The students omitted *–s/-es* where they need to attach *–s/-es*, conversely they added *–s* to singular noun where there is no need add. These errors are caused by plural marker does not exist in Indonesian language. Therefore, plural marking errors are unavoidable. Most of the students did not automatically change the forms of singular for plural use. It is also existed in other inflected forms such in verbs exhibiting tense, aspect, and mode. In other words, the automaticity to change the inflected forms such as noun exhibiting number has not yet reached.

In addition, about fossilized errors of verb, Payne (1997) discusses the major part of speech in terms of distributional and structural properties (morphological and syntactic studies). For example, in the case of verbs, Payne notes that their structural properties have to do with internal structure of the verbs itself. According to him, errors of English verbs mostly occurred in confusing situation. The learners are difficult to use correct verb to indicate agreement with its subject. He states that the learners get confused with so many tenses in English which do not exist in their mother tongue language. In addition, the situation during thesis seminar presentation and its discussion put the students to feel nervous and nerve-racking. Hence, they were fossilized in the use of tenses.

Chomsky's (1965), classic analysis of the English auxiliary system, says that tense accounts as the clause, takes the lexical predication as its complement. Now, if a particular tense is specified as being an affix (like past in English as opposed to future), it will attract another head to itself so it can attach to the head morphologically. Thus, Indonesian students' errors of verbs were easily fossilized, not adverbs or adjectives.

Dealing with prominent causes of fossilization errors the students committed, there are some causal factors as the causes found. The internal factor of fossilization of English morphosyntax is due to the complexity of English morphosyntactic properties. English nouns and verbs exhibit many properties that often confuse the students in terms of their inflected forms and use. The students with low proficiency of morphosyntax easily committed fossilization, particularly on the categories which have complex properties. It is in line with Payne (1997) says that English verbs have twelve tenses so they arouse errors unfortunately for students of English. For them, time and tense do not match.

The fossilized errors of inflected nouns and verbs found in this research were prominently caused by L1 interference, pedagogical intervention and lack of opportunity to use English. It is in line with Fauziati (2011) says that "the data analysis shows that the learners' grammatical errors appeared to be so dynamic which they then appear due to the pedagogical intervention.

Why mostly inflectional nouns and verbs? Nouns and verbs become indispensable element in a language. The students committed fossilized errors of nouns and verbs due to many reasons. In this case, as what stated above, language transfer or L1 interference manifested as the most prominent cause of fossilization. The other causes were lack of opportunity to use English, lack of learning strategies, lack of understanding of English morphosyntax, and lack of self-monitoring.

*Substitutio*n error was the most dominant type the students committed were due the influence of Indonesian language feature as stated by Leung (2009:144) that first language can cause persistent errors/fossilization if first language features do not match the second or the foreign language features. It is reasonable as the system of inflectional morphology and syntax do not exist in their native language (Indonesian).

Considering the types of the errors which commonly fossilized, the lecturers are recommended to pay serious attention to the students' fossilized errors in writing instructional design.

D. CONCLUSION

This research reveals fossilization commonly occur because the students do not know they have produced the same morphosyntactic errors which then lead

the errors to be persistent. The students committed errors in all categories of morphosyntax (nouns, verbs, adverbs, and adjectives) whereas adjectival and adverbial errors were not manifested as fossilized errors. They were not able to automatically change the inflectional forms to produce grammatical utterances. It would be reasonable due to mother tongue (Indonesian) interference is the most fundamental problem. It interfere English in such a way that gives a serious impact to the language produced. Hence, the students often produced twisty sentences and forget the rules of inflectional morphology. They might familiar with the rules, but that knowledge does not come to mind when they speak. Besides, linguistic competence or pedagogic intervention, lack of opportunity to use English, also contributed as the prominent causes of fossilized errors the students committed. They do not make use any chances to get information and to renew their knowledge so that the errors may not be encountered and vanished. It is argued that speaking skill and grammatical competence become main criteria for high education. Therefore, giving serious attention to grammar and speaking skill are really recommended.

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