

INTEGRATIVE TEACHING: Writing Vs Grammatical Structures

By M. Syafii S

Abstract

Setiap bahasa di dunia ini mempunyai pola dan aturan (grammatical structure) tersendiri penulisannya. Dalam pembelajaran bahasa, seorang guru atau instruktur tidak biasa memisahkan antara cara penulisan dan tata kebahasaan yang terkandung didalamnya

Introduction

In the process of language teaching and learning, the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) are always sounded by both language teachers and language learners. As a matter of fact, all language skills mentioned above are integrated in a system of language teaching. They can be applied in the classroom settings at one. However, not all language teachers are capable to apply them at one. Besides, the language learners tend to select one of the language skills they like. It is understandable since the teaching of English is still positioned as one of the foreign languages taught in Indonesian educational institutions.

Most teachers of English especially, in Indonesian context still dichotomize among the language skills themselves. They tend to teach each language skill separately. Consequently, the language learners tend to

learn merely a part of the language skills. The views and treatment toward this phenomenon merely bring both foreign language teachers and language learners into a big gape and barrier of acquiring the four language skills. Paulston and Bruder (1976: 203) classify the language skills into four skills, such as: (1) listening skill, (2) speaking skill, (3) reading skill, and (4) writing skill. If we observe the illustration of the citation above, writing skill is categorized into the last of the four language skills, however, it really does not mean that writing is the most difficult skill to be acquired by the language learners.

Even the grammatical structure of the language is not mentioned as one of the four language skills above, however, its existence is very important for any languages. No one of the spoken language on the world that does not have its grammatical structure. Grammatical structure of any language is viewed as a unique language characteristic in which, they are agreed by its speakers. For those who are interesting in learning a certain foreign language have to be familiar with the grammatical structure of the language being learned.

Writing is the one of the most important language skill to be acquired by any language learners. Through writing language one can get in touch with others in all parts of the world. Writing language is closely related to the information language. However, the grammatical structure of the language is as the basic key to deliver and elicit the meaning of the language itself. Considering that both writing language and the existence of its grammatical structure cannot be divorced from each other, and they must be integrative as a language system, therefore the writer would like to present an article on "*Integrative Teaching:*

Writing Vs Grammatical Structure". The problems which will be revealed in this article, are as follows:

- Point of view on grammatical structure
- How to combine both writing and grammatical structure into a written paragraph.

Grammatical Structure and Paragraph Writing

Grammatical Structure

Every language has its specific patterns and regularities in which they are used to convey meaning, some of which make up its grammar. Part of grammatical structure is the order of words. Any speaker of English knows that "*Ernest Hemingway likes John*" does not have the same meaning as "*John likes Ernest Hemingway*". Another part of grammatical structure is changed in the forms of words (morphology)—"*the cow is mad*" for example, means something different from "*the cows were mad*".

Stork and Widdowson (1974: 88) point out the term "grammatical structure in its broadest sense, which refers to statements about regularities and irregularities in language. In its every day usage it evokes ideas about "correctness" and we often hear people condemning others for their "bad grammatical structure". This every day view of grammar involves valuable judgements about the acceptability of certain utterances and includes strong prescriptive elements. This attitude grew out of approaches to grammatical structure analysis that can be traced ultimately to the ancient Greeks, and the ideas were passed on to the Western World via the Romans. Grammatical structure had already become

a set of rules prescribing “correct usage” by the end of the middle ages.

Furthermore, Neufeldt and Guralnik (1991) state that:

“Grammar is the part of the study of language which deals with the forms and structures of the words (morphology), with their customary arrangement in phrases and sentences (syntax), and words meaning (semantics). A body of rules imposed on a given language for speaking and writing it, based on its grammar or some adaptation of another” (1991: 586).

In relation to grammatical structure of English, Leech in Bygate et.al (1994: 17) divides grammar into three varieties. They are (1) academic grammar (for university students), (2) teachers’ grammar, and (3) Learners’ grammar (pedagogical grammar). Teacher’s grammar falling between the two stools of academic grammar and learner’s grammar. It could be argued that teacher ideally should be well versed in both academic grammar and learner’s grammar: that they should have a sound, detailed academic knowledge of the language besides, they also have to be thoroughly skilled in the methodologies of mediating grammar to learners at different stage settings.

Based on the citations above, it can be asserted that grammatical structure is a part of language study in which one of which cannot be separated from each other (morphology, syntax, phonology, and semantics). They must be well integrated in a system of any language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). Besides, there are three types of grammar (academic grammar, teacher’s grammar, and learner’s grammar).

Grammatical Structure and Paragraph Writing

As already mentioned above, that grammatical structure cannot be separated from those of any language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). It seems that the existence of grammar is very crucial to convey the meaning of any phrases or sentences.

In the process of writing, of course, grammatical structure plays a very important role. It is closely related to the correctness of the messages being delivered. Therefore, it is necessary in the process of teaching and learning English as a foreign language to combine both grammatical structure and paragraph writing simultaneously. In this case, in the writer's opinion, it is better to initiate from "the sentence types and paragraph structure".

Sentence types and Paragraph Structures

As a matter of fact, there are two types of verbs in all types of sentences. First, is "*descriptive verb*" and second, is "*action verb*". Descriptive verbs are such as the verbs of: *seem, appear, look, sound, smell, taste, fell, and the forms of be sentences*, such as:

- He is a teacher (predicate noun)
- He is diligent (predicate adjective)
- He is at school (predicate adverb)

Descriptive verb is used to tell or describe a person, thing, and place. They are often used to develop the descriptive paragraphs. In other words, it can be asserted that descriptive paragraph is mostly developed by using descriptive verbs.

On the other hand, action verbs are the verbs which are mostly used to answer the questions of the actions, such as:

? – What did (does) he do? It can be answered by:
+ - He ran (runs) away. In this case, the verb “runs/ran” is action verb. Because it can be used to answer the question of action verb, besides, either *transitive* or *intransitive action verbs* are mostly used to develop *narrative paragraphs* in a writing series.

Combining both Descriptive and Narrative Paragraph

It is also a crucial part to enlighten the combination of descriptive and narrative paragraphs. In the combination of both between descriptive and narrative it is important to determine the “tense” either descriptive verbs or action verbs as the basic rules to develop the writing paragraphs. Marquez (1983:17) divides the “tenses” of both descriptive verbs and action verbs into following sequences:

ACTION VERBS

Present Progressive tense

Past Progressive Tense

Future Progressive Tense

DESCRIPTIVE VERBS

Simple Present Tense

Simple past Tense

Simple future

Examples:

Peter *is saying* something

The woman *seems* scared and confused

The neighbors *were fighting* last night

They *seemed* still mad at each other this morning

George *will be looking* for a job four years from now

He *will be* self assure and confident

Conclusion

- Grammatical structure is a part of language study in which one of which cannot be separated from each other (morphology, syntax, phonology, and semantics). They must be well integrated in a system of any language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing).
- The process of writing is meaningful and useful in the effort of improvement of language learners' grammatical structure of any foreign language being learned.
- Mastering grammatical structure of English is the basic fundamentals for those who want to be proficient writer of English. Consequently, all types of sentences in which they are reflected into two types of verbs (action verbs and descriptive verbs) can be utilized and employed in all modes of paragraph writings.

References

- Hornby, As. 1974. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Langan, John. 1986. *College Writing Skills with Reading*. Singapore: McGraw-Hill Book Company.
- Leech, Geoffrey. "Students' Grammar-Teachers' Grammar-Learners' Grammar" in Bygate, Martin et al. Eds. 1994. *Grammar and The Language Teacher*. Great Britain: Prentice-Hall International (UK) Ltd.
- Marquez, Elly J. "Teaching Grammar and Paragraph Structure Simultaneously". *English Teaching Forum*. July 1981.
- Neufeldt, Victoria and David B. Guralnik. 1991. *Webster's New World Dictionary of American English*. New York: Prentice-Hall Book, Inc.
- Stork, F.C. and J.D.A. Widdowson. 1974. *Learning About Linguistics: An Introductory Workbook*. London: Hutchinson & Co. (Publishers) Ltd.
- Walters, Larry. "Atheoretical Model for Teaching Students to Write". *English Teaching Forum*. Vol. XXI, No2, July 1983.