

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is divided into six parts. They respectively deal with the background of the study, the problems of the study, the objectives of the study, the scope and limitation of the study, the significance of the study, and the definition of key terms.

A. Background of the Study

People are more aware of how important the language is. Language is means of communication, which helps people to interact, express, and communicate their ideas. The use of language can not be separated from human life because it is a tool that is used by people in speaking or writing. Corder states that language is an object like a tool, which we can pick up, use for some purposes, and put down again². By using language, we can ask other people to do something, exchange our ideas, and can communicate each other about our plans in the future or experiences.

English is an international language, and it has an important role for communication in the world. In Indonesia, English is the first foreign language, and it is taught as a compulsory subject in Junior and Senior High Schools. Even, in the recent years, many elementary school students have had English classes. Since English is foreign language, it is realized that most Indonesian students generally get some difficulties in learning it. The

² S.Pit. Corder, "The Language Laboratory", *English Language Teaching Journal*, 16 (1962), 20.

difficulties occur when they lack of knowledge about vocabulary and grammar. In fact, they have to master the language skills, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing because the goal of learning English is to use it in spoken and written communication.

Writing is a basic and very important language skill. It is integral to the learning process and it can improve the students' academic performances but it can not be learned in a short time. Writing skill requires more capabilities than other language skills and need special preparation. It requires the students to understand the spelling and punctuation, the sentence structures, the vocabulary, and the paragraph development. Because of that, writing is one of the four skills which have a high status as a part of the culture of society or institution. It means that writing is one of the communication means by which the students can communicate their ideas and messages. It involves composing which implies the ability either to tell or retell pieces of information in the form of narration, description, or transform information into texts.

According to Brown, he said that different from speaking in which people learn language through a natural process or human behavior as learning to "walk", writing is a learned behavior as learning to "swim", people need someone to teach them³. It means that people learn to write if they are members of a literate society and usually if someone teaches them. Among the four language skills, "writing is the most difficult skill for second

³ D.H Brown, *Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy-2nd Edition*, (New York: Long Man, 2001), 334.

or foreign learners to master⁴. It is because writing is considered as a complex process of putting ideas down on paper to transform thoughts into words⁵. Since the idea or thought is an abstract thing which comes from our mind, it is not easy to transform it into understandable or readable form. The similar definition also stated by McDonald & McDonald. They pointed out that writing is usefully described as a process of putting thoughts into words and words into papers⁶.

The difficulties in applying the rules of the language in writing cause the students to make errors. According to Fries and Lado, error is a failure to respond a particular stimulus automatically. It occurs when the features of the eighth be classified into linguistic errors. Dulay states that there are four taxonomies that are important to consider, namely the linguistic category taxonomy, the surface strategy taxonomy, the comparative analysis taxonomy, and the communicative taxonomy⁷. While Richards concludes that writing errors made by the students are caused by two factors, they are interlanguage and intralingual. Interlanguage factor occurs when they make deviant sentences from mother tongue. Intralingual occurs when they lack grammatical knowledge in the target language⁸. He also points out that complex rule learning is typically characterized by overgeneralization,

⁴ J.C Richard and W.A Renandya, *Methodology in Language Teaching: An Anthology of Current Practice*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 303.

⁵ Brown, *Teaching by Principles*.,336.

⁶ C. R. McDonald and R. L. McDonald, *Teaching Writing*, (America: Southern Illinois University Press, 2002), 7.

⁷ Heidi Dulay, *Language Two*, (Oxford : Oxford University Press, 1982),146.

⁸ Jack Richard, *Error Analysis Prospective on second Language Acquisition*, (London : Longman, 1974), 6.

ignorance of rule restriction, incomplete application of rules and false concept hypothesized.

From the explanation above, the researcher is interested in analyzing grammatical error in writing descriptive essay among the tenth grade students in MAN Prambon Nganjuk. Senior High School students still make errors in their writing, especially the students who have a lot of ideas but not have enough knowledge of language to express what they want to write. They find it difficult to make English writing that are grammatically correct and acceptable. The main cause is that foreign language writing is linguistically different in many ways from native language students to understand the spelling and punctuation, a sentence structures, vocabulary, and paragraph development. Because of that, they still make errors when they have to express or describe something in English, especially about the structure construction.

Based on the background above the researcher conducts a study entitled *“An Analysis on Grammatical Errors in Descriptive Writing of the Tenth Grade Students of MAN Prambon Nganjuk”*.

B. Problems of the Study

The problems of the study can be formulated as follows:

1. What are the common grammatical errors made by the tenth grade students of MAN Prambon Nganjuk in the academic year of 2016/2017?

2. What are the possible causes of grammatical errors in writing made by the tenth grade students of MAN Prambon Nganjuk in the academic year of 2016/2017?

C. Objectives of the Study

Based on the problem formulation, the objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To describe the common errors made by the tenth grade students of MAN Prambon Nganjuk.
2. To describe the possible causes of grammatical errors in writing made by the tenth grade students of MAN Prambon Nganjuk in the academic year of 2016/2017

D. Significance of the Study

Findings of this study are expected to be useful for both students and teachers.

1. To the students

This study is expected to help the students to be aware of the errors that they make and the causes of the errors. It is also expected that they will find the correct construction in grammar and they use the language correctly

2. To the teachers

It can help the teacher to prepare the English writing material and can be used to give more attention to errors made by the students in

learning writing. Then the teacher will explain the grammar comprehensively and find the best method in teaching writing.

E. Scope and Limitation of the Study

The students usually make errors in their writing, especially related to the structure construction; namely grammatical errors. In this study the researcher focuses on grammatical errors found in the students' writing. The grammatical errors here are not the explanation about the different between errors and mistakes specifically, it is generally explaining the deviation in the language norm.

The researcher only takes descriptive text writing since the tenth grade of MAN Prambon Nganjuk has descriptive materials in the curricula.

The analysis focuses on four types of errors; they are addition, omission, malformation, and disordering.

F. Definition of the Key Terms

Giving the definition of key terms in this study is intended to avoid misunderstanding between the researcher and the reader related to everything about this study.

1. Error is a deviation from accepted rules of a language made by a learner of a second language. Such errors result from the learner's lack of knowledge of correct rules of the target language.
2. Mistake is a performance error that is either a random guess, in that is a failure to utilize a noun system correctly. All people make a mistake, in

both native and second language situations. Native speakers are normally capable of recognizing and correcting such “lapses” or mistakes, which are not the result of some sort of temporary breakdown or imperfection in the process of producing speech. These hesitations, slips of the tongue, random ungrammaticalities, and other performance lapses in native-speaker production also occur in second language speech.

3. Grammatical Error is a term used in prescriptive grammar to describe an instance of faulty, unconventional, or controversial usage, such as a misplaced modifier or an inappropriate verb tense.
4. Writing is an act of communication which takes place between the researcher and the reader via the text in an interactive process.
5. Descriptive is giving information about how something or someone looks, sounds, etc using words to describe what something or someone is like.