

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the introduction of the study. It consists of the background of the study; problem of the study; objectives of the study; and the definition of the key terms.

A. Background of the Study

As the first foreign language in Indonesia, English has been taught as a compulsory subject for Indonesian students in elementary school (SD), junior high school (SMP), and also senior high school (SMA). Moreover, starting in junior high school, English has been set as one of the basic course outlines. On the other hand, based on the 2013 Curriculum of the Indonesian educational system, teaching English for senior high school students was established with the aim of developing students' communicative competence, including interpersonal, transactional, and functional discourse by using various English written and spoken texts in accurate and acceptable language features (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2013). Moreover, Kemendikbud, as cited in Nurdawati (2018), stated that the means of communication are understanding the language and expressing thoughts, information, technology, feelings, culture, and language development, which includes four skills of language: reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

As one of the English skills, writing becomes a productive skill, which is classified as an ability because writing has a different character from the nature expressed by speaking directly (Anjayani et al., 2013). Herawati (Herawati, 2019) stated that writing has become an important skill compared with the other skills.

Writing has become one of the abilities that are frequently demanded in many aspects of human life. In this teaching-learning process, writing becomes important since it has a role in making three other skills perfect. Writing is included as an important skill in learning a language because writing is formal and more compact, such as: semantic, syntactic, lexical, pragmatic, phonological, and grammar. As one of the productive skills, (Toba, Noor, & Sanu, 2019) stated that for written communication and academic purposes, writing skills should be mastered by Indonesian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students to produce articles, letters, papers, essays, journals, theses, project reports, etc.

Lots of studies have been conducted to investigate EFL learners' writing. The results of the study showed that there were lots of mistakes made in EFL learners' writing related to the use of correct grammar. Grammar covers some important aspects of language such as, irregular verbs, singular or plural form, prepositions, articles, tenses, etc. as a small aspect, preposition and article seem do not have an important role in a language. Indeed, both of articles and prepositions are as important as other aspect in a language to construct a good sentence. Prepositions and articles are often become a problem faced by EFL learner because they often make mistakes.

Nasser (Nasser, 2020) found that Iraqi EFL learners face difficulties in English writing. Iraqi EFL learners have problems differentiating the use of the English preposition 'on' correctly. In line with Nasser, Abdalla (Abdalla, 2021) and Ibrahim (Ibrahim, 2017) investigated the use of English prepositions by Arabian EFL learners. It was found that the majority of Arabian EFL learners encounter problems in using English preposition phrases. Moreover, Alwreikat & Yunus

(Alwreikat & Yunus, 2020) found that the majority of Jordanian students made errors related to the English preposition system and rules. Miller (Miller, 1985) in her study investigated the use of articles by Arabic, Japanese, Khmer, Portuguese, Swedish, and Tagalong students. It was found that the indefinite article (a/an) becomes a slight problem faced by EFL learners.

Besides that, many studies proved that there were many errors related to the use of prepositions and articles by Indonesian EFL learners. In her study, Merizawati (Merizawati, 2018) found that preposition and article are included as the most difficult errors faced by students. Latupeirissa & Sayd (Latupeirissa & Sayd, 2019) also studied grammatical errors made by Indonesian EFL students in writing. The results showed that there were lots of mistakes made by students related to the use of prepositions and articles. Moreover, Mahardika, Sudipa, & Artawa (Mahardika, Sudipa, & Artawa, 2021) found that senior high school students still faced lots of difficulties in using prepositions and articles.

Based on researchers' preliminary visit, it was found that students of MAN 4 Kediri still have lots of grammar errors in their writing. When the researcher did an informal interview with the teacher, the results showed that students still have difficulty in writing paragraphs using correct grammar, including prepositions and articles. Then, a students' writing test was conducted to get a sample of student writing by eleventh grade students. The students were asked to write one paragraph of descriptive text. In the results, from 25 students writing texts, there were lots of mistakes related to the use of prepositions 'in', 'on', and 'at', as well as articles 'a', 'an', and 'the'. Although it was simple, the use of prepositions and articles still becomes one of the crucial problems faced by eleventh grade students

at MAN 4 Kediri. Based on the statement above, the researcher considered that the use of preposition and article by Indonesian EFL learners was important enough to be analyzed. The aims of the research were to find the use of preposition and article by Indonesian EFL learners at MAN 4 Kediri and also to find the factors which caused students' errors in using preposition and article.

B. Problem of the Study

Based on the background of the study, the problems of the study have been formulated as follows:

1. What types of errors did Indonesian EFL learners make in using prepositions and articles in their writing at MAN 4 Kediri?
2. Why do students at MAN 4 Kediri often make errors in using prepositions and articles in their writing?

C. Objectives of the Study

Based on the background of the study above, the objectives of the study have been formulated as follows:

1. To find out types of errors made by Indonesian EFL learners' in using preposition and article on writing at MAN 4 Kediri
2. To find out the reasons why do students at MAN 4 Kediri often make errors of using preposition and article on writing.

D. Definition of The Key Terms

1. Preposition

In a sentence, a preposition serves as a connector, joining one word or pronoun to another. As a result, a preposition can't stand alone: it must always be part of a phrase, which can change the meaning based on the context. According to Mutmainna, prepositions can be classified according to their roles, such as prepositions of time (I will arrive at five o'clock), place (She lives in London), direction (Marlen went to the market), agent (He painted the room), and instrument (She unlocked the locker with the key) (She is listening to music).

2. Article

Articles are terms that specify whether a noun is specialized or generic. An article is a word that modifies a noun, which might be a person, place, thing, or concept. An article is a type of adjective, which is a word that modifies a noun. Adjectives usually change nouns by describing them. However, articles are employed to highlight or allude to nouns instead. In writing and conversation, we employ definite and indefinite articles to refer to a noun or a collection of nouns.