

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Learning English is not as easy as we may imagine. English is the first foreign language in Indonesia which means English has an important role in international relation between Indonesia and other countries in the world. Therefore, it requires great efforts for the students to learn the elements of the language, such as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and spelling. The mastery of English by the SMA graduates is felt still far from satisfactory. This tendency maybe caused by several factors either internally or externally. The internal factors come from the background of the students themselves such as their intelligence and motivation. Meanwhile, the external factors may come from the teachers' capability, students' environment and facilities. In Indonesia, the government encourages the Indonesian citizens to learn English. English is taught as a compulsory subject from Junior High School up to Senior High School even some semesters of college level.

In learning a language, we often find some words that have the same meaning but different functions. In the English and Indonesian grammar, we also find verbs that occupy the function of nouns. A verb may function as a noun, and in English it can be formed by adding the suffix –ing to the verb that is called gerund. In Indonesian, there is no change in its form. It can be seen in these sentences:

In Indonesian

(1) a. Dia menari dua kali seminggu.

b. Menari adalah hobinya.

In English

(2) a. She dances twice in a week.

b. Dancing is her hobby.

In this case we can see that the word *menari* in both sentences [(1) a] and [(1) b] have the same meaning and form, but they have different functions. In [(1) a] *menari* functions as a verb and in [(1) b] *menari* functions as a noun. There is no change in form between a verb *menari* and a noun *menari*. Thus, in Indonesian there are no changes in making nouns from verbs. However, in English, we find word *dances* [(2) a] and *dancing* [(2) b] which have the same meaning but different in their forms and functions. In point [(2) a] the word *dances* functions as a verb but in point [(2) b] *dancing* functions as a noun which is called gerund.

The use of infinitive and gerunds in English poses a problem for the majority of EFL students like Indonesian students. The problems can also be caused by the interference of the students' first language. For example, "Bahasa Indonesia" does not have tenses like those in English. This difference constitutes problems in learning English. They often make a lot of mistakes. In learning the target language, the students' errors may occur in the components of the language. Students often make a sentence, which is syntactically right but lexically wrong or

vice versa. This shows that the students have difficulties in using words or sentences appropriately. A gerund is the –ing form of a verb used in the same way as a noun. It can be used as a subject, (direct) object or object of a preposition.

A gerund as a subject = Playing basketball is an interesting sport.

(V + -ing)

A gerund as an object = We enjoy playing basketball.

(V + V + -ing)

A gerund after a preposition = He is fond of playing basketball.

(Prep + V + -ing)

From the explanations above, one can draw a conclusion that the same form of –ing ending can make the students confused. It appears when all of the –ing forms are used in one sentence together, as in the following sentence taken from English Grammar and Composition:

e.g. *Watching the judges in the balcony, Gwen was trying to win the contest with her loud singing.*

**Watching** is a present participle modifying Gwen, and **trying** is part of a verb phrase. Only **singing**, used as object of preposition with, is a gerund (Warriner, 1958:68). In this process the teacher must stress that the –ing form of gerund has a function as a noun which is different from present participle, that has a function as an adjective, and also different from other verbal ending in –ing.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

In order to make a systematic approach in solving the problems, the statements of the problems are further developed into the following questions:

- 1) Are the eleventh grade students of SMAK Sint Carolus Kupang in the school year of 2017/2018 able to use gerund correctly?
- 2) What is the ability level of the eleventh grade students of SMAK Sint Carolus Kupang in the school year 2017/2018 in using gerund?

## **1.3 Objectives of The Study**

According to Eichelberger (1989) in Erom (2016: 57), the terms “purpose of the study” is for objective of the study. The objective of study is for doing the study to clarify a specific audience has concerning the problem statement. Based on the explanation, the writer can elaborate the purposes of the study as follows:

- 1) To find out whether or not the eleventh grade students of SMAK Sint Carolus Kupang in the school year of 2017/2018 able to use gerund correctly.
- 2) To find out the ability level of the eleventh grade students of SMAK Sint Carolus Kupang in the school year 2017/2018 in using gerund.

#### **1.4 Significance of The Study**

Significance of the study is its meaning, importance, or value for human being (Erom, 2016: 62). Doing the certain research or study must have its aim at getting something for various values of human lives.

By doing the research, the writer hopes that the result will be helpful to provide:

- 1) Input to the learners of English of the eleventh grade students of SMA NEGERI 4 Kupang in the academic year 2017/2018 in order to be more careful in using gerund.
- 2) Input to the Teacher in order to know how far the students' ability in learning gerund.

#### **1.5 Scope and Limitation**

According to Erom (2016: 63) Scope in a study or research is the range of the discussion covered in a topic of a study. Limitation is a noun derived from the verb *limit*. To limit means to control something so that it is not greater than a particular amount, number, or level (McIntosh, 2013 in Erom, 2016: 63).

Based on the definition above, in this study the writer limits the discussion on the use of gerund only, a gerund as subject of a sentence, a gerund as object of preposition, a gerund as direct object of certain verbs.

## 1.6 Definitions of the terms

There are some terms used in this study that should be defined as follow:

### 1. Ability

Ability is potential, power to do something physically, or mentally (Hornby, 1987:2). In this sense, ability means the students capability in using gerund especially as subject, object and after preposition.

### 2. Gerund

According to Hornby (2005), gerund is a noun in the form of the present of participle of a verb (that is, ending in *-ing*) for example *travelling*, in the sentence *I preferred travelling alone*.

### 3. SMAK Sint Carolus Kupang

SMAK Sint Carolus Kupang is a private school located in Jln. Adi Sucipto No.44 Penfui, maulafa sub-district.