

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

English is one of the languages in the world. English has become a tool for International communication and it plays an important role in all aspects of life, such as the political, socio cultural and education field (Jackie Walters: 2010). In Indonesia, English has been taught as compulsory subject in junior and senior high school. It is also taught as general basic course in many universities.

There are four basic skills which are important in learning a language. They are listening, speaking, reading and writing (Brown: 2007). Among the four language skills taught in schools, writing is the most difficult skill. As Richards & Renandya (2002:303) claimed “there is no doubt that writing is the most difficult skill for L2 learners”. Writing needs specialized skills that include the ability to express the writer’s opinions or thoughts clearly and efficiently besides having enough stock of vocabulary and good mastery of grammar. The difficulties in writing are not only in generating and organizing ideas, but also in translating these notions into legible text.

Writing is even regarded both as an objective and a means of learning language. It means, learning a writing system is similar to learn a language and the fundamental objective is communication. In writing, students do a process of developing their own ideas using their own words to form simple sentences and good paragraph. The writing process has five steps such as, prewriting (finding ideas, listing ideas, selecting topics and organizing), writing (write a draft),

revising (rewriting), editing and publishing (Betty M. Dietsch 2006:11). No matter what you are writing, the process is same.

As one of the basic skills, writing is taught in order to improve students' ability in writing. Writing can reinforce the mastery of grammatical structure, idioms and vocabulary that have been studied by the students. When the students write, they make the effort to express idea. Writing skill is seen as language skill which is most difficult and complex because it requires widely perception and involves thinking process, needs good understanding on grammar, proper word choice, mechanics and form.

Composition as a result of writing is arranged through some paragraphs. Paragraph is formed by sentences, so when the students want to write a good composition, firstly they must be able to make good sentences and then make the sentences into a paragraph and weave the paragraph to a good composition. Beside a good composition, the writer should pay the attention in the following elements, such as grammar, vocabulary, mechanics, fluency and the form or organization.

For the sake of this writing, the writer focuses her concentration to the grammatical errors. She realizes that grammar is one of the sub skills that plays important role in English learning process.

In Indonesia, English grammar is taught starting from junior high school until university. However many students or learners still face some problems in using it correctly in writing. Based on the writer's experience in learning English, she found that many students make some errors in writing composition, such as: the uses of article, preposition, punctuation, capital letter, spelling, etc.

Errors are the flawed side of learner speech or writing. They are part of conversation or composition that deviates from some selected norm of nature language performance (Dulay, Burt and Krashen: 1982). Errors are part of second language process. Errors can be observed, analyzed, and classified to receive something of the system operating within the learner, let to surge study of learners' error called "error analysis".

By knowing and understanding the students' errors, the teacher is expected to be able to improve his/her teaching skill and the instructional process. Error can be useful feedback for teachers. In this case, teachers will measure themselves how far they get success in giving their materials to their students.

Based on some facts stated on the previous statements, the writer wants to find out the parts of grammatical errors written by English learners, especially eighth grade students of SMPK St. Yoseph Kupang as accurate data.

Based on the points above, the writer wants to make a study with the title "**A STUDY ON GRAMMATICAL ERRORS IN THE COMPOSITION, WRITTEN BY EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS OF SMPK ST.YOSEPH KUPANG IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2013/2014**".

1.2. Problem Statements

The problems of this study are formulated in the following questions that should be answered in the data analysis. The problem statements in detail are presented below:

1. What are kinds of grammatical errors in the composition committed by eighth grade students of SMPK St. Yoseph Kupang?

2. What are the most common grammatical errors in the composition committed by eighth grade students of SMPK St. Yoseph Kupang?

1.3. Objectives of the Study

Objective is actually the aims of doing the study. In line with the problem statements having been stated in the previous subchapter, the objectives in detail are presented in the following:

1. To describe and explain kinds of grammatical errors in the composition committed by eighth grade students of SMPK St. Yoseph Kupang.
2. To know the most common grammatical errors in the composition committed by eighth grade students of SMPK St. Yoseph Kupang.

1.4. Significance of the Study

The study will be expected to present some valuable contribution to the following persons:

1. The writer

This study will enrich her knowledge about English grammar, errors and writing in particular.

2. The eighth grade students of SMPK St. Yoseph

The writer wants to inform the students about their ability in using grammar in their writing.

3. The English teacher

The result of this study will inform the teacher about the grammatical errors committed by the students in their composition.

1.5. Scope and Limitation

The study is focused on the error in writing, written by eighth grade students of SMPK St. Yoseph Kupang in the academic year 2013/2014. In producing writing, one tends to commit error on grammar, vocabulary, mechanics, fluency, and organization. For the sake of this study, the writer limits her main attention to the error committed by the students particularly on grammatical aspects based on surface strategy taxonomy to evaluate the writing products of the students.

1.6. Definition of Terms

To avoid misunderstanding of the reader, the writer gives some definitions:

1. Grammar

Grammar is generally thought to be a set of rules specifying the correct ordering of words at the sentence level. Richard et al (1985:154) define grammar as “a description of the structure of a language and the way in which units such as words and phrases are combined to produce sentences in the language”.

2. Error

Error is a way which a fluent or native speaker of the language regards as showing faulty or incomplete learning (Richard, 1985:95).

3. Error analysis

Carl James defines error analysis as “the process of determining the incidence or occurrence, nature, causes, and consequences of unsuccessful language learning” (James 1998:1).

4. Writing

Writing is a form of communication that allows students to put their feelings and ideas on paper, to organize their knowledge and beliefs into convincing arguments, and to convey meaning through well-constructed text. (Jana Aupperlee. 2009)

5. Composition

In this study, composition means a piece of writing made by eighth grade students of SMPK St. Yoseph using their own words.

6. SMPK St. Yoseph Kupang

SMPK St. Yoseph Kupang is one of the private junior high school in Kupang. It is located in Herewila Street, Naikoten II, Kupang-East Nusa Tenggara.