

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

This part discusses some introductory points include background of problem, the research question, the purpose of research, the significance of research, rationale, methodology of research, data analysis, and clarification of the terms.

1.1 Background of Problem

Each and every day, in every social interaction, we communicate our feelings, ideas, and thoughts with others, besides; we keep social relations among others when we communicate either verbally or nonverbally.

As social being, interaction and communication take an important place in our life because people are actually dependent. Brown (1994: 159) explains that interaction is the collaborative exchange of thoughts, feelings, or ideas between two or more people resulting in a reciprocal effect on each other.

From the statement above, it can be inferred that interaction and communication cannot be separated from language which is a main tools for them (interaction and communication).

In teaching and learning process, language is important. Through language, all ideas from teachers can be well communicated. A successful communication will lead teachers to achieve a successful teaching.

Moreover, at present, there are many languages can be used to make a communication among human beings. Many people can speak more than one

language. They can master not only their native language but also their foreign language—English, Dutch, French, etc.

Brown (1994: 122) says that English increasingly has used as a tool for interaction among non-native speakers. English has become a tool for international communication in transportation, commerce, banking, tourism, technology, diplomacy, and scientific research.

In Indonesia, English takes an important place and has used largely in many sectors of life, such as education, culture, economic, etc. In the field of education, English plays as the subject, which is taught and learned by many people from kindergarten up to the university. In teaching and learning process, students are expected to practice English fluently, either good at listening, speaking, reading or writing.

Most Indonesian students regarded writing as a difficult subject to learn and to practice. Lenneberg (1967) in Brown (1994: 319) notes that human beings universally learn to walk and to talk but that swimming and writing are culturally specific learned behaviors. We learn to swim if someone teaches us. We learn to write if we are members of a literate society and usually only if someone teaches us. Therefore, many Indonesian English students were frequently criticized from their lack of writing ability. This caused students to make errors during their writing process. They make some sentences ungrammatically, and then make some errors in writing mechanism.

In written English, the grammatical and mechanical rules cannot be separated. It would be impossible to learn or to write something effectively without knowing the grammar and mechanics.

Grammatical rules are the way in which words are organized in a language in order to make a correct sentence (Hewings and Hewings, 2005: 1). It helps learners to identify grammatical forms, which serve to enhance and sharpen the expression of meaning. Then, mechanical rules are conventional rules such as the one requiring capitalization for the first word of a sentence.¹ It helps them to identify mechanical aspects, which involve spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and paragraphing. A correct grammatical structure and mechanics will determine the meaning of the sentence and it can avoid misunderstanding to the readers.

Moreover, the writer's reason of choosing this case is based on his teaching experience in Senior High School of Al-Islam, Cilengkrang, Bandung. From that teaching experience, he found a problem which is related to students' comprehension in writing text.

The problem involves errors on grammatical and mechanical rules in English. Based on that problem, the writer is interested to analyze the errors and to further know about kinds of grammatical and mechanical aspects which are often met, and to know students reasons or argument for making the errors. Then, the researcher would like to give an overcoming to the English teachers in that school to avoid or at least to decrease the errors students make.

¹ Taken from: <http://teachingenglishonline.net/grammatical-and-mechanical-sentence-problems-in-writing-1/> [accessed on 11/12/2012].

To give a little description about what the writer intends to do, he puts some examples of grammatical and mechanical errors in writing, which are the result of his pre-observation on his teaching experience at SMA Al-Islam Cilengkrang, Bandung, as follow:

A. Grammatical Aspect

1. The students wrote the composition using sentence patterns well.

For example, "My mother cooks everyday in my house."

2. The students used the wrong articles.

For example, "Dina play a games everyweek."

3. The students could not determine the singular and plural forms.

For example, "He cannot use his both foots to walk."

4. The students ignored the tenses.

For example, "The teacher teach English yesterday."

B. Mechanical Aspect

1. The students made some mistakes in spelling.

For example, "I go to shcool at 7 am."

2. The students made some mistakes in punctuation.

For example, "Are you sick."

3. The students made some mistakes in capitalization.

For example, "He met mr. andi last year."

In the case of grammatical errors, the writer would like to analyze the errors in tense, pronoun, word order, articles and preposition. While in mechanical errors, he would like to analyze the spelling-mistakes, errors in capitalization and punctuation.

Brown (1994:340) suggests that in the case of writing, error correction must be approached in a different manner. So it is hoped that this research can overcome and give solution to the errors they make. It is also expected that the result of writing evaluation can make the students to avoid some errors during the writing process whether it is grammatically or mechanically.

Regarding those statements above, the writer formulates his research entitled **“AN ANALYSIS OF GRAMMATICAL AND MECHANICAL ERRORS IN WRITING NARRATIVE TEXT MADE BY GRADE ELEVEN STUDENTS OF SMA PGRI TANJUNGSANG SUBANG”**.

1.2 The Research Question

Based on the explanation above, what the writer tries to search for in this research can be interpreted into several questions as follow:

- A. What kinds of grammatical and mechanical errors do the students make in their writing?
- B. What are the casual factors of errors they make in their writing?

1.3 The Purpose of Research

Regarding the problems above, this research intends to find out the follow purposes:

- A. To find out the kinds of grammatical and mechanical errors that the students make in their writing.
- B. To find out the casual factors of errors that the students make in their writing.

1.4 The Significance of Research

This research has significances in some areas as follows:

1.4.1 To the English Department and English teachers:

- a. This research will get them know how to avoid students' errors on grammar and mechanics in writing an English composition.
- b. The teachers will know what they have to do and they can stimulate their students to write an English composition grammatically and mechanically correct.

1.4.2 For the students:

- a. By this research, students will recognize their grammatical and mechanical errors and then do the self-correction in writing.
- b. They will avoid those grammatical and mechanical errors in their writing.

1.4.3 For the other reseacher:

- a. This research can be a source of information in order to show the grammatical and mechanical errors by giving the right forms of the errors that are found from this research.
- b. This research will be a reference for someone who looks for the material related to errors on grammar and mechanics in writing composition.

1.4.4 For the writer:

- a. He will know more about the errors evident in students' writing composition and giving the ways to overcome the errors of grammar and mechanics in their writing.
- b. He will know some factors and students' reasons of making errors in their writing then he tries to solve the problems of their reasons.

1.5 Rationale

Evaluation, according to Gilbert Sax (1980: 18) in Arifin (2010: 5), is a process through a value judgment or decision is made from a variety of observations and from the background and training of the evaluator.

Evaluation can be used as a tool to measure the ability of students' acquisition in their study. This way is useful for a teacher to know his/her students' achievement in their learning. Because of this evaluation, teacher can

prepare what they have to do in order to get their students gain the information and knowledge which are given by him/her during the process of learning.

One of evaluation tools is an analysis. According to (Kamaluddin, 2000: 6), analysis is “a process of using a technique to identify, classify, and interpret systematically to the given data made by the students in order to determine the progress or success in learning a foreign language and what problems they encounter.”

What will be analyzed here is about the errors of grammar and mechanics in writing narrative text. Error is a flawed side of a learner speech or writing. The error is explained in Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics (1992), which is quoted by Abushihab in his Journal (2011: 545), as follow:

A student makes mistakes and errors when writing. Mistakes are due to lack of attention, fatigue or carelessness. They can be self-corrected when attention is called. Errors are the use of linguistic items in a way that a learner of the language regards them as showing faulty or incomplete learning. They occur because the learner does not know what is correct, and thus errors cannot be self-corrected.

According to Brown (2000: 217), “a mistake refers to a performance error in that it is a failure to utilize a known system correctly; while an error is a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker, reflecting the inter-language competence of the learner.”

Grammatical errors are the errors which include errors in tense, pronoun, articles, word-order and preposition. Then mechanical errors are the errors in spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.

The type of text will be used for analysis is narrative text. Narrative text is a type of texts which tells a series of event from one time to other one, which is

outlined from first events, then triggers crisis, and then get resolution (Pratyasto, 2011: 39).

Regarding those explanation above, the writer is interested to analyze students' errors in their composition of writing narrative text either grammatically or mechanically. This is done in order to give a contribution by giving the solutions to overcome the errors.

Therefore, error analysis can give information about students' difficulties during their acquisition and the way they learn and develop their language learning. The writer expects that the results of this analysis of error can help English teachers to adapt themselves to the learner's needs rather than impose their (the teachers') preconceptions of how the students ought to learn and when they ought to learn. The chart shown in Figure 1.1 well illustrates this rational.

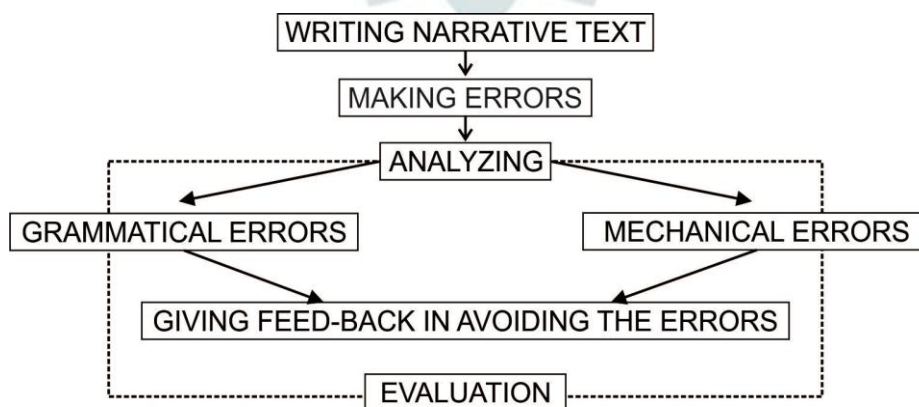


Figure 1.1

1.6 Methodology of Research

Kothari (2004: 8) explains that research methodology is a way to systematically solve the research problem. It may be understood as a science of studying how research is done scientifically.

This research uses a qualitative methodology because the study is intended to discover the phenomenon exists in student writing, that is the errors in grammar and mechanics rules. According to Sugiyono, (2012: 15) a qualitative methodology is a research methodology that is based on postpositive philosophy and used to do a research on scientific subject (not experiment) where the writer is an instrument key. In their *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Denzin and Lincoln (2000: 3) in Ritchie and Lewis (2003: 2) offer the following definition:

Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that makes the world visible. These practices turn the world into a series of representations including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.

Research process consists of series actions or steps necessary to effectively carry out research. The chart in Figure 1.2 well illustrates a research process.

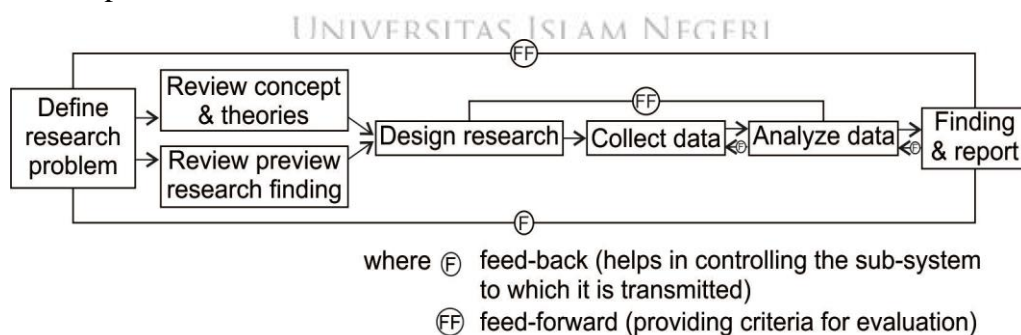


Figure 1.2 (Research Process)

1.6.1 Method of Research

This research uses a descriptive method. The purpose of this method is to describe the grammatical and mechanical errors in students' writing for the grade eleven students of SMA PGRI Tanjungsiang, Subang.

1.6.2 Source of Data

The writer takes the data from some published-books, e-books, journals, and websites related to this research. The data gives the writer some theoretical backgrounds to support writing this paper.

1.6.3 Technique of Collecting Data

The techniques that used by the writer in this research for collecting the data are through:

1.6.3.1 Test

Test is an instrument that can be used to measure a base capability and achievement. The important of using the test will understand the problem of collecting data in the research (Arikunto, 2006: 223).

The test will be obtained from asking the students to write a free composition on narrative text consisting at least of three paragraphs or in 90 minutes on free topics. Each student is provided with two pieces of lined polio paper and a piece of test containing the instruction of doing test. They are then asked to write a composition. After students finished their writing, the writer collects their writing and choose 15

compositions randomly. Then he analyzes them by investigating the grammatical and mechanical errors in their writing.

1.6.3.2 Interview

In order to gain directly some important information related to some factors of making errors on grammars and mechanics in writing a composition, the writer uses interview guidance by interviewing some of the students.

According to Arifin (2009: 157), interview is a form of non-test evaluation tools which is done through direct or indirect conversation with the students. The writer uses a type of mixed interview between structured and non-structured interview (opened and closed interview).

In this interview guidance, the writer uses a purposive sampling. Sugiyono (2012: 124) states that a purposive sampling is a technique of determining samples by a certain consideration. The writer uses this purposive sampling because he wants to interview some students which mostly make errors on grammar and mechanics in their writing process.

1.7 Data Analysis

The data that are analyzed on the research are qualitative data. The qualitative data are organized by using descriptive analysis, which is to organize the data that are gained by describing and clarifying it.

The chart shown in Figure 1.3 well illustrates a process of data analysis.

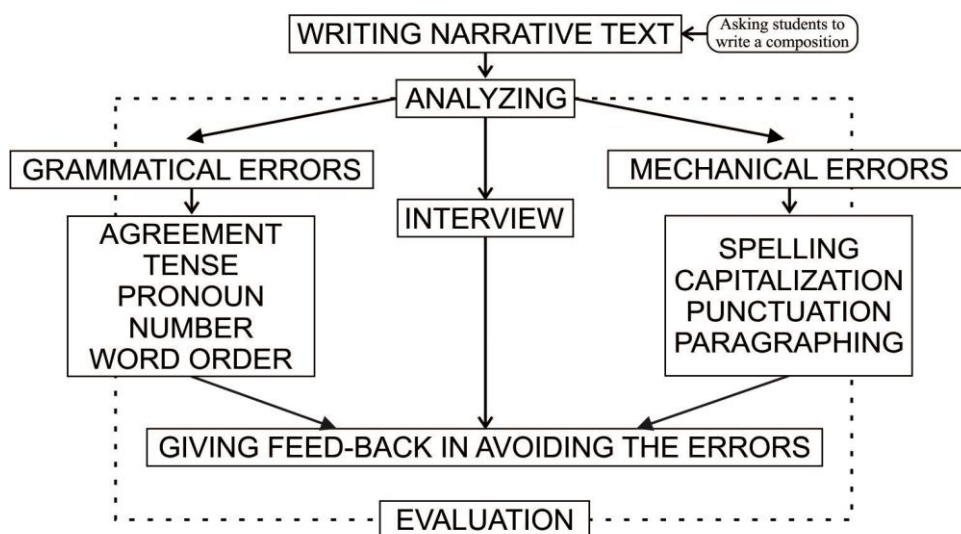


Figure 1.3 (The process of data analysis)

Firstly, the researcher asks the students in the class to write a free composition on narrative text consisting of three paragraphs or about 250 words in 90 minutes on the given topics. Each student is provided with a piece of lined double polio paper and a piece of test containing the instruction of doing test and the topics of which they might choose. They are then asked to write a composition.

Second, after students finished their writing, the researcher collects their writing and analyzes them by investigating and organizing the data based on based on two main aspect of English composition.

Third, if the data are fallen into grammatical errors, then the researcher classify and list them into related aspect of the grammar; tense, pronoun, word order, article or preposition.

Fourth, if the data are fallen into mechanical errors, the researcher classifies and lists them into related aspect of the mechanics; spelling, capitalization, or punctuation.

Fifth, the researcher chooses some students to be interviewed. Those chosen students are they who mostly make errors on grammar and mechanics in their writing process. By doing this interview, the researcher wants to know some factors of making errors on grammars and mechanics in writing a composition.

Sixth, after analyzing the students' composition and interviewing them, the researcher edits and proofreads the student's composition. Then the researcher assesses those compositions from the first drafts to the final ones.

Finally, the researcher takes a conclusion from that analysis and interview by giving feed-back either for the students or for their English teacher. This conclusion may also be useful for further researcher.

1.8 Clarification of the Terms

To avoid misunderstanding, the writer gives some clarifications as follow:

1. Grammar, according to Knapp and Watkins (2009: 32), is to describe and analyse the way that words are put together within sentences. Grammar is also how a text is structured and organized due to the characteristic of particular genres in relation to purpose, audience, message and structure.
2. *Grammatical error*, which the writer means in this this research, is the erroneuous grammatical form. It exists in the students' English

composition. It involves the error of English sentence tense, articles, pronouns, preposition, and word order.

3. *Mechanics* is conventional rules such as the one requiring capitalization for the first word of a sentence, from (<http://teachingenglishonline.net/grammatical-and-mechanical-sentence-problems-in-writing-1/>) [accessed 11/12/2012].
4. *Mechanical error* stated in this research discusses the problems of writing mechanism, which involved errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization and paragraphing.
5. Narrative text is a type of texts which tells a series of event from one time to other one, which is outlined from first events, then triggers crisis, and then get resolution (Pratyasto, 2011: 39).