

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the research, the problem of the research, the purpose of the research, the significance of the research, the assumption of the research, the scope of the research, and the operational definition of terms.

1.1 Background of the Research

In learning English, there are four language skills that must be learned, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. Writing skill is one of the productive skills that must be mastered in using a language. As one of the productive skills that must be mastered by students, writing is an important part of learning for students to understand English, because writing is a productive skill in learning English (Fareed, et.al , 2016). Writing in any language is a difficult skill to acquire, to write well students must have an understanding of grammatical structure, vocabulary and spelling use (Swick, 2009).

Writing is a difficult English skill for students, especially for foreign language learners, this statement is supported by Kumala, et.al (2018) who argues that writing is difficult to learn because writing requires extensive knowledge and a deep thought process to produce a sentence, words, and paragraphs that are the same with good English grammar in order to be understood.

Having good grammar can help a person to understand what other people are writing and saying. Grammar is an important part of a process of using language, both in written and spoken language, because grammar is used to interpret the structure of a language. Toago, et.al (2013) state that grammar is a set of structural rules that govern the structure of sentences, words and phrases in any natural language. Learning a language without understanding grammar will give you some problems mastering English well. Muhsin (2016) stated that there are many rules in grammar, including articles, part of speech, tense, etc.

For some Indonesian students, changing shapes and combining words into a sentence is not an easy thing. Syarif (2014) stated that they seem to have difficulty mastering English grammar, especially about tenses, they do not know what tenses they want to use to make paragraphs. According to Ali (2010) tense is something that explains when an event or event occurs in a sentence, either in a sentence that is in accordance with the situation in the present, past, or future. Tenses are a part of grammar that is used to describe the time of events that occur in the story. Therefore, students must understand the tenses in writing a paragraph or essay, one of the tenses is the simple past tense.

Simple past tense is a tense that describes an event that happened in the past. According to Azar (1992) simple past tense is a sentence pattern in English that is used to talk about an activity or situation that started and ended in the past. However, students in Indonesia still have difficulty in using simple past tense, especially in determining sentence patterns and choosing verbs in the simple past tense. According to Mubasyira (2017) they often have difficulty in determining verb changes,

especially changes from verb 1 to verb 2, and the difference between regular and irregular verbs in the simple past tense. This can occur due to a lack of understanding and mastery of students towards grammar, resulting in errors

The findings of previous studies are important to support this research. Oktaviani (2017) in her study on error in the use of simple past tense showed that the most dominant error was omission error in writing recount texts, this is because students have difficulty and still feel confused by the differences in Indonesian and English grammar. Students also cannot distinguish between regular and irregular verbs. The similarity between this study is that they both discuss errors in the use of simple past tense, but in this study the focus is on analyzing errors based on the surface strategy taxonomy by Dulay, et.al, namely omission, addition, and misformation. Another study by Saputri (2018) states that the most common errors found are misformation errors. This is because due to the lack of students' knowledge of the use of the simple past tense. The similarity between this study is that they both discuss errors in the use of simple past tense, but in Saputri's study the focus is on examining errors in the use of simple past tense in speaking, but in this study the focus is on examining errors in the use of simple past tense.

Based on the statement above, it can be seen that there are still many students who make error in the use of the simple past tense. Therefore, it is necessary to do an error analysis. Error analysis has an important role in knowing the types of errors made by students in writing texts, especially in the use of the simple past tense. Therefore, this research is conducted to investigate grammatical errors, especially in the use of the simple past tense by students.

1.2 The Problem of the Research

Based on the background of the research above, the researcher proposes two research problems:

1. What type of errors are made by students of SMP Miftahul Ulum Rambipuji of using simple past tense?
2. What are the causes of the students make errors in using the simple past tense?

1.3 The Objective of the Research

The purpose of this research is:

1. To describe the type of errors made by students of SMP Miftahul Ulum Rambipuji of using simple past tense.
2. To find out what causes of students to make errors in using the simple past tense.

1.4 Significance of the Research

The result of this research can be useful for:

1. Theoretically, the result of this research are expected to give contribution to the English teaching and learning, this research also can be used as the input and reference especially in the use of simple past tense.
2. Practically, this research is to provide information to teachers about students' errors in using the simple past tense, so this research can help teachers find the right solution in teaching English structure. For students, this research is beneficial for helping them not to make the same errors and not have difficulty in using simple past tense. For other researchers, it can be used as a reference for

those who want to do similar research in the teaching and learning process of English. Especially in teaching the simple past tense.

1.5 Assumption of the Research

In this research, the researcher assumed that the most frequent errors made by students is misformation. Misformation error can be caused by intralingual transfer, because the students still can not distinguish between regular and irregular verb, so made them to make misformation error. More specifically, students will make errors in the use of verb (regular and irregular verb) and errors in the use of to be "was" and "were".

1.6 Scope of the Research

This study focuses on analyzing error in using the simple past tense especially the use of To Be (Was, Were) and Verb (Regular and Irregular Verb) made by students in writing. The subjects of this study was 8th grade students of SMP Miftahul Ulum Rambli Puji.

1.7 The Operational Definition of Terms

In order to prevent misunderstandings, this study define the following main term:

Error: error is systematic deviations from the rules of the language that apply when a student does not master something, so they continue to use it incorrectly (Norrish, 1983). This means that an error is a deviation from the grammar made by students

both in writing and speaking which usually occurs repeatedly. The error referred to in this study is a grammatical error in the simple past tense made by students in writing.

