

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study aims to investigate the kinds of errors and most dominant types of error in using gerunds in writing descriptive paragraph, and the causes of the errors. Thus, this chapter discusses several aspects dealing with the topic of the research. They are the background of the research, problem of the research, objective of the research, significance of the research, assumption of the research, scope of the research, and operational definition of the research.

1.1 Background of the Research

Writing is one of the four language skills in the English language that is considered difficult to acquire. It is a crucial language skill for students to improve their language abilities, literacy, and cognitive skills, as well as their academic thinking (Fang et al., 2010). Furthermore, the writing process will assist in forming and developing conceptual understanding. However, completing this multi-step process requires organizing, clarifying, and articulating knowledge. Writing and grammar are very related since grammatical rules are one of the factors that learners should consider before writing anything. Grammar knowledge is essential for successful writing; it can assist students in producing good sentences.

English grammar is a language rules which describe the structure of

expressions in English, including the structure of phrases, words, clauses, and sentences. Acquire a knowledge of grammar is very important part, according to Brown (2001:362), “Grammar tells us how to construct a sentence (word order, verb and noun systems, modifiers, phrases, clauses, etc), and discourse rules to tells us how to string those sentences together”. Furthermore, DeCapua (2017) added that language acquisition without grammar will be confusing. Learners will fail to use the language correctly without having a good understanding of grammar. By learning grammar, the students know how to make a good sentence and arrange the words well into a meaningful sentence in the context of verbal (*oral*) and non-verbal (*written*) communication. Unfortunately, the students' comprehension about it is still poor, whereas the students have learned English grammar in many years (Suryasa & Wedistira, 2017), including of using gerunds in grammar.

Gerunds constitute as one of grammar's components, it is a thing that has been learned by the students. However, the fact that it is still commonly found the error in using it in students' written production. Ignoring the use of gerunds in grammar will lead to misunderstandings when conveying or communicating ideas, especially in the context of writing. According to Lado (2014:58) a gerund is an –ing form of the verb that has function as a noun.

By the fact that students are still making general errors in using gerunds, it may be caused by the difficulty in distinguishing the –ing form in gerunds usage. Since, there are Various kinds of an –ing forms in English, the students are still confused in learning about an –ing form, especially for gerunds. They have tendency

to think about an –ing form in gerunds as a tense usage of present participle. Indeed, gerunds has the same form as the present participle. However, their function is different in the same sentence (Akib, 2018).

There have been several studies that have investigated the students' abilities on the grammatical components. Most research tends to focus on the definite/indefinite articles, 3rd person-singular subject-verb agreement, tense shift, modality and gerunds. As this study focus on the error analysis of gerunds, thus, there have been previous studies related to this study. Some of those studies are presented below.

The study is from Nurmawaddah (2014), with the title of the study is “An Error Analysis of Using Gerund Made by the Students”. She stated that, because there are so many different varieties of gerunds, it is conceivable that students will have difficulty mastering the grammatical structure. The study focused on 3 kinds of gerunds; gerunds as subject, object of preposition, and object. There were 30 students from the third grade at Senior High School 4, Cimahi who became the research participants. The study used a test of 30 multiple choices of gerund questions to collect the data. The data then analyzed using a qualitative method. The results of the study revealed that 40.6 percent error when using gerund as a subject, a 63 percent error when using gerund as a direct object, and a 48.6 percent error when using gerund following preposition.

From the previous studies description above, this study is interconnected. This previous study used different kind of test to know the students' errors (i.e., multiple

choice, fill in the blank, essay writing). Moreover, the kinds of gerunds errors, they limit the kinds of gerunds errors that they wanted to investigate. This present study will employ different kind of test to find out students' errors. A writing task in the form of descriptive paragraph will be the instruments to find out students' errors in using gerunds. Furthermore, the kinds of gerunds errors that will be investigated in this study will be wider

1.2 The Problem of the Research

Based on the literature outlined above, this study addresses the following research questions:

1. What kinds of errors do the students make on the use of gerunds in their writing ?
2. What are the causes of the students' errors on the use of gerunds in their writing?

1.3 The Objective of the Research

Based on the research questions formulated above, the present study thus aims:

1. To find out kinds of errors students make on the use of gerunds in their writing.
2. To find out causes of the students' errors on the use of gerunds in their writing.

1.4 Significance of the Research

The researcher hopes that the findings of this research can give contribution to the English teaching and learning. It has two major significances; they are theoretical and practical significances.

1. Theoretical Significance

Theoretically, conducting pedagogical research is useful in the development of theories of language teaching and learning. Therefore, it is expected that this research will be able to contribute to the practical of linguistic theories, particularly in the teaching of English as a foreign language to Indonesian students

2. Practical Significance

The results of this research are expected to give teachers an overview about students' errors in using gerunds within the context of writing. Moreover, this study may also give an input or evaluation of what need to be improved by teachers for the students' comprehension.

1.5 Assumption of the Research

The assumption of this study is students will make some errors in using gerunds in their descriptive text. It has two assumption. They are :

1. The researcher assumes the most frequent errors that will appear are misinformation and omission errors.
2. The researcher assumes the most errors causes that will appear are overgeneralization.

1.6 Scope of the Research

In this study the researcher limits the scope of this research, starting from the research participants, location of the research, and variables studied. Eleventh grade

senior high school students of a private vocational school in Jember will become research participants in this study. Moreover, this study will only focus on the use of gerunds as a subject and gerunds as an object and object of preposition.

1.7 Operational Definition of the Key Terms

In order to prevent misunderstandings, the researcher should define the following main terms :

1. Error

error refers to gaps in a learner's knowledge that arise from the learner's lack of understanding of what is correct. In this context, it refers to grammatical errors in the use of gerunds made by students in their writing. The errors focus on 4 types of errors, those are Omission, Addition, Misformation, and Misordering

2. Gerunds:

Gerunds are verb-ing form, which functions as noun in a sentence.

3. Writing:

Writing is one way to express opinions and. It is an activity of arranging words into form of meaningful sentences or paragraphs by organized ideas in written form.

4. Descriptive paragraph:

It refers to students' writing about describing person, place, events, situation, etc, in the form of paragraph.