



# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, the researcher discusses the background of the problem, the identification of the problem, the limitation of the problem, the formulation of the problem, research questions, the purposes of the research, the significance of the research, and the definitions of the key terms.

### **1.1 The Background of the Problem**

English is one of the international languages used by many countries, one of which is Indonesia. In Indonesia, English is taught as an important subject because it is very influential for the future of students. For example, when students want to continue their education abroad, the student must pass the English test, and by understanding and studying English she will easily pass the English test.

In English, there are four types of skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. These four skills are important to master when students want to learn English. According to Xhuvani (2015), the role that language plays is immense, since time embarked. The four necessities in language or commonly known as the four skills reading, writing, listening and speaking plays a vital role in any language learning. Writing is an English skill that is used to communicate information in written form. Writing skills are very important for students in every educational institution. Through writing skills students are able to express their feelings, ideas or thoughts in written form, so that others can understand their thoughts. Writing is also one way to assess students' abilities. Writing

involves several language components, namely grammar, vocabulary, clause, and phrase.

Grammar is the most important aspect of writing and is one of the basic components of language that students must learn. In grammar there are many tenses and the simple present tense is one of them. Simple present tense is important as a basic rule for students to make and use sentences in writing. The simple present tense is used to describe routines and habits. Simple present tense is one of the tenses used in descriptive texts.

Descriptive text is one type of the English texts that contains a detailed description of an object. Usually the objects depicted can be inanimate objects, places, as well as humans and other living things.

The formal education pathway at the secondary level consists of high school (SMA/MA), and vocational high school (SMK). The difference between SMA/MA and SMK is that SMA/MA prioritizes theory while SMK prioritizes practice or expertise in a particular field. The process of learning English in SMK is quite difficult for students to understand because English is a general subject and not a major. Judging from the achievement graph, the average national score for the SMK level, namely English (41.78) is lower than competency (44.12) and Indonesian (65.72). The description text is one of the texts taught in SMK and in writing a descriptive text, sometimes students still make errors. For example, students write "He, walk to school every day" instead of "He walks to school every day". According to Azar (2003), the types of errors are grouped into thirteen kinds, namely : singular-plural, word form, word choice, verb tense, add or omit a

word, word order, incomplete sentences, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, article, meaning not clear, and run on sentence. These errors can occur when students write a descriptive text and these errors must be observed, analyzed, and classified in order to improve the quality of students in writing a descriptive text. One way to improve the quality of writing descriptive text is by teaching writing. Teaching writing at SMK is one of the indicators in the syllabus and lesson plans.

There are several researchers who have conducted the research related with student's errors to use the simple present tense in writing a descriptive text. Vattia (2018) did a research entitled "Students' Errors in Using Present Tense in Writing Descriptive Text (A Study at MTsS Jeumala Amal, Lueng Putu)". She analyzed the most dominant errors made by students based on four classifications of types of errors, namely omission, addition, misformation, and misordering, and also described the factors causing students' errors in using the present tenses in writing a descriptive text. Next, Eka (2014) also did research entitled "Error Analysis on the Students Writing of Descriptive Text at SMK N 2 Ciputat Timur". She analyzed the sources and types of errors made by students in using adjectives in writing a descriptive text based on four classifications of types of errors, namely omission, addition, misformation, and misordering.

Because the lack of knowledge of SMK students about grammar and the researchers above only analyzed errors based on four classifications of types of errors made by students in writing descriptive texts, the researcher was interested to analyze students' errors to use simple present tense in writing a descriptive text, based on the classification of errors suggested by Azar (2003).

## 1.2 The Identification of the Problem

Descriptive text is one of the texts that is taught to students when they are in high school. The descriptive text has the meaning, namely, a text that contains a detailed description of an object, whether a living being, object, place, or event, so that the reader seems to see, hear, feel, or experience the things described by the author themselves. According to Suwarna (2012), description is a series of paragraphs that contains a description of an object, be it objects, people, or places. Descriptive text is divided into three types, namely spatial descriptive text, objective descriptive text, and subjective descriptive text. Spatial descriptive text is a text that describes the space or place where an event takes place. Objective descriptive text is a text that describes a thing or person by revealing the identity of the thing/person. Subjective descriptive text is a text that describes an object such as the interpretation or impression of the author's feelings (the author's interpretation).

In writing a descriptive text there are two problems faced by students. The first problem is grammatical errors. According to Azar (2003), the types of errors are grouped into thirteen kinds, namely : singular-plural, word form, word choice, verb tense, add or omit a word, word order, incomplete sentences, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, article, meaning not clear, and run on sentence. Likewise, Runkati (2013) categorizes the errors into two main types. The first type is errors at the sentential level, which are fragments, run-ons, subject-verb agreement, word order, tenses, capital letters, and punctuation. The

latter one is errors at the word level, such as articles, prepositions, word choices, nouns, and numbers.

The second problem is semantic error. Sometimes students write texts that are grammatically correct but donot make sense. According to Richards and Schmidt (2002), semantic errors are classified according to vocabulary (lexical error), misunderstanding of a speaker's intention or meaning (interpretive error), production of the wrong communicative effect, e.g. through the faulty use of a speech act or one rules of speaking.

### **1.3 The Limitation of the Problem**

Based on the identification of the problem above, the researcher limited the research to the grammatical errors made by the first grade students in using the simple present tense in writing objective descriptive texts. The researcher refered to the errors classified by Azar and limited them to singular-plural and verb tense. The researcher also deals with spelling, punctuation, and capitalization (mechanics) because mechanics are important in writing.

### **1.4 The Formulation of the Problem**

Based on the limitation of the problem above, the researcher formulated the research problem as follows "What are the types of grammatical and mechanics errors made by the first grade students in using the simple present tense in writing objective descriptive texts at SMKN 4 Padang?"

## **1.5 The Research Questions**

Based on the formulation of the problem above, the research questions of this study are as follows:

1. Do the first grade students of SMKN 4 Padang have errors related to singular-plural in using simple present tense in writing objective descriptive texts?
2. Do the first grade students of SMKN 4 Padang have errors related to verb tense in using simple present tense in writing objective descriptive texts?
3. Do the first grade students of SMKN 4 Padang have errors related to mechanics in using simple present tense in writing objective descriptive texts?

## **1.6 The Purposes of the Research**

The main purpose of this study to find out the errors of the first grade students in using the simple present tense in writing a descriptive texts at SMKN 4 Padang. Specifically, the research objectives are:

1. To find out whether the first grade students of SMKN 4 Padang have errors related to singular-plural in using simple present tense in writing objective descriptive texts.
2. To find out whether the first grade students of SMKN 4 Padang have errors related to verb tense in using simple present tense in writing objective descriptive texts.
3. To find out whether the first grade students of SMKN 4 Padang have errors related to mechanics in using simple present tense in writing objective descriptive texts.

## **1.7 The Significance of the Research**

This research is expected to contribute to teachers, students, and further researchers. For teachers, the results of this study are expected to provide information about the types of errors students make in writing descriptive texts using the simple present tense, so that the teachers can improve their teaching methods.

For students, the results of this study are expected to provide information about the types of errors and errors that are most dominant in their writing descriptive text using the simple present tense so that the students can correct their errors and increase their knowledge. For further researchers, this research can be a reference for them and they can conduct further research related to other tenses in writing a text.

## **1.8 The Definitions of the Key Terms**

In order to clarify the key terms used in this study, some definitions are put forward:

- a.) Error in writing refers to defiation in writing descriptive text developed by students.
- b.) Writing is an English skill that is used to communicate information in written form.
- c.) Simple Present Tense is a tense used to tell an event that takes place repeatedly (habit).
- d.) Objective Descriptive text is one type of English text that contains a detailed description of an object.