

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to present a brief description of the research. First, it presents the general account of the present study, which covers the background of the study, formulation of the problem, objective of the study, and the significance of the study. The background of the study provides relevant information, which contains an overview of the area or issue that will be researched and how the study will address this issue. Formulation of the problem consists of statements that aim to set a framework about what research problem will be addressed. Then, the research objective describes concisely what the research is trying to achieve. The significance of the study explains why this research is needed and the importance of this study.

### 1.1. Background of the Study

Writing becomes the most important part of promoting language acquisition for the students because writing is classified as a productive skill in learning English (Bello, 1997). Brown (2001) defines writing as a process in which ideas are transformed into words by giving structure and logical organization to the ideas. Comparably, Horvath (2001) states that writing is a cognitive and learning experience that allows people to discover what they want to say. Therefore, it can be concluded that writing is a process in which sentences are arranged into paragraphs to express ideas.

One type of the written English text that has to be learned by seventh-grade students is descriptive text. The Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture (MoEC, 2018) Number 37 of 2018, which develops the current curriculum (Curriculum K-2013), writes that descriptive texts are one of the English texts that seventh-grade students should master (MoEC, 2018). Furthermore, Husna (2017) suggests that

descriptive texts are a kind of writing that consists of descriptions, characteristics and definitions of an object or something. Meanwhile, Gerot and Peter (1994) state that this text aims to describe a particular thing, people or place and clearly show readers the physical appearance of something. Therefore, it can be summed up that a descriptive text is a text which describes people, places and objects physically based on their appearance.

In classroom practices, some students still encounter many writing difficulties and problems when writing a descriptive text. They likely make errors in the agreement production, as in the sentence *'She always take a bath and clean the bedroom'*. Others have difficulties in dealing with tenses in *'My father was special in my life'*, verb as in *'His name Effendi'*, noun in *'I have a one brother'*, pronoun, for example, *'My sister never complained when he educated me'*, and preposition as in *'She was born on Lamongan'* (Ismayanti & Kholiq, 2020). In a similar vein, Novita (2017) suggests that, in her research, one of the difficulties students encounter when writing descriptive texts is the grammatical aspect. This is because grammar rules in a language allow a person to combine several words into a larger unit (Greenbaum & Nelson, 2002). It means that in the context of foreign language learning, some students may have difficulties writing descriptive texts in creating and organizing the ideas and translating them into readable written texts.

Whereas, grammar has become something that cannot be separated away from the writing area, particularly in descriptive texts. Ellis (1997) emphasized that grammar is a traditional principle that concerns the formation and interpretation of words, phrases, and sentences. It can be explained that grammar is a set of rules that decide how the words are arranged into the formation of a meaningful unit. In addition, Harmer (2001) also said that learners who learn a language should know some aspects of grammatical structure to obtain competency in using a language that consists of verbs,

nouns, adjectives, adverbs, and pronouns. Therefore, in writing descriptive texts, the learners need to know about grammatical rules and how to apply them to protect against something wrong or error in the sentence. Besides, by having a good grammatical understanding, the message or information will be delivered correctly, and there will be no misunderstanding in understanding the meaning of the sentence. Without grammatical understanding, seventh-grade students tend to make errors. Silalahi (2014) said that limited knowledge of grammatical rules and rare opportunities to use rules in writing descriptive texts lead the error production for foreign language students. In addition, students' limited knowledge of the use of language features and generic structures of descriptive texts may lead them to make some errors in writing descriptive texts (Novita, 2017).

Based on the explanation above, the researcher is interested in conducting the research study to investigate students' grammatical errors and the sources of these errors in writing descriptive text by conducting error analysis. According to Divsar and Heydari (2017), error analysis is a way to gather errors found in students' language in order to clarify what the students commonly make types of errors. In addition, error analysis can help teachers to gain an overall knowledge of the errors made by the students (Xie & Jiang, 2007).

In particular, this research is conducted to investigate the types of grammatical errors that most students frequently commit and the factor that sources their errors in writing descriptive texts based on the language features of the text. The researcher will use a surface strategy taxonomy based on a theory Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982) coined as a starting point in the description of errors. The surface strategy taxonomy holds much promise for researchers to identify the cognitive processes that underlie students' reconstruction of a new language (Choironi, Sukirlan, & Suparman, 2017). In addition, these types of errors are related to each other.

## **1.2. Formulation of the Problems**

Based on the background of the study presented above, the researcher plans to do a grammatical errors analysis on students' descriptive writing texts at Seventh-Grade Junior High School Students. The formulation of the problem in this study is as follows:

1. What are the most common types of grammatical errors in writing descriptive texts?
2. What are the sources of errors that students make in writing descriptive texts?

## **1.3. The Objectives of the Study**

From the problem formulation above, the objectives of the study are formulated into two parts. The first is identifying students' most common grammatical errors in writing descriptive texts. Second, the researcher will examine the sources of errors in writing descriptive text.

## **1.4. Significance of the Study**

Grammatical errors analysis needs to be done by the teachers to describe the errors committed by the students in writing descriptive texts. Error analysis is a way to gather errors found in students' language in order to clarify the reasons behind errors found in students (Divsar & Heydari, 2017). Furthermore, Khan and Khan (2016) state that error analysis can assist teachers in finding out the difficult area of English subject in which students find difficulty in learning language especially writing skills. In addition, it will also help teachers and syllabus designers discover beneficial remedial material for solving such grammatical errors.