

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **A. The Nature of Students' Difficulties**

Many students stated that difficulty is a simple word which cannot be explained through words. They tend to avoid expressing their difficulties since it showed their weakness. Besides, they thought that other people do not need to know about this. The word difficulty has several meanings as Brown (2000:216) stated that difficulties are mistake, misjudgment, miscalculation, and erroneous assumption form. Mistakes has something to do with difficulties, for instance, difficulties occurred after mistakes. Moreover, teacher needs to know students' need as Steven in Lee (2008) stated that if understanding students' difficulties is needed for being ideal teachers, so all teachers have to investigate their students' difficulties in order to help their students and improve themselves as teachers. Therefore, in fact this is not just an ordinary thing since it will influence students' motivation and teachers' quality in teaching learning process.

#### **B. The Nature of Writing**

##### **1. The Concept of Writing**

Writing is one of skills in language where students can express their ideas into written form, as Harmer (2004:13) said that has always formed part of the syllabus in the teaching of English. It was also defined by Javed (2013:130) that writing is one of the skills of English language which is considered as one of the difficult skills to master. Of course it becomes

teacher's challenge as they have to teach English along with its skills. In fact, it was stated by Kraayehoord (2009:23) that teachers are one of the key factors in delivering instruction that leads to the development of competent literacy learners. In this case, students are expected to be able to master all of the language skills, especially writing skill. That is why, teacher should be able to anticipate and solve the problems that may occur in teaching learning process so that they will meet the intended outcome.

In order to reach the goal, teachers must be able to motivate and stimulate students' ability in generating ideas and expressing them into writing. Lesley (2003:144) believed that writing is one way of communicating with others (e.g., a letter to friend, a letter to newspaper, etc.). In addition, Widayanti (2008) mentioned that learning English to Indonesian learners is a complex process where in Indonesia language between orthographic writing and pronunciation is similar. In Indonesian language, students do not need to substitute and think about the change of verbs to express time like they do in English. The things which are different are only passive and active voice. They do not even need to pay much attention to the way they pronouncing word since the letter and the sound were just the same.

## **2. Writing Ability**

Writing is one of the productive skills. In writing students must be able to use hand writing, proper grammar, vocabulary, etc. Every student can write, yet expressing their idea or experience into writing is very difficult to do. Content of the writing depends on the knowledge, experience, grammar and

vocabulary competence, and also concentration that students possess. There are several aspects in writing, and every single aspect does matter. The better the competence in aspects, the better the writing. In addition, it has something to do with practice. Writing needs process and it all will be ended with product. There were several researchers who stated that both process and product are equally crucial. It was stated by Brown (2001:335), how well a student is final product measured up against a list of criteria that included content (related to ideas, use of description, cause/effect, and consistent focus.), organization (logical sequence, conclusion), vocabulary use, and grammatical use, mechanical considerations (spelling and punctuation). Unfortunately, not all teachers taught all aspects of writing to their students. They only taught grammar part and asked students to do the exercise.

### **3. Writing Procedures**

Basically, students have various level of writing competence. For those whose competence is weak, they are assumed that they need more writing practice. In writing skill, several education experts stated that there are 4 main procedures in writing. They are planning, drafting, revising, and editing (Richards: 2002, Lesley: 2003, and Hammer: 2001). At the beginning of the process there might be similarities, however, there are possibilities for different results.

#### **a. Planning**

In planning, students are usually stimulated by the teacher using pictures, questions, or cards so that they can produce some ideas. Students are asked

to think about certain topics and elaborate their ideas into writing (Kane: 2000)

b. Drafting

After students choose the idea to write, they can start elaborating the idea and writing by using correct grammar.

c. Revising

After done, students can ask to the teacher about their writing. If they make mistakes, they may revise it before submitting their writings to their teacher.

d. Editing

In this procedure, students will edit their writing. Aspects which are assessed are grammar, spelling, punctuation, diction, and also accuracy. Unfortunately, students tend to be reluctant to edit their work since they assumed that their work is already correct.

Those four procedures are recommended by education experts. However, in reality students did not pay attention to this matter. They just wrote a paragraph without applying the procedures.

### **C. The Simple Tenses**

Grammar plays a big role in English. Sentences would not be meaningful if the pattern of the sentences is not in the correct order. The change of verbs must be noticed in constructing English sentences in order to get the intended meaning. (Ratna, 2013:162). Simple tenses are a part of grammar which is commonly used both in verbal and in written communication. In constructing sentences using this tense, adverbs are commonly used to give the fullest and the sharpest senses to the

sentences (Ratna, 2013:162). Therefore, students must be able to decide what to use when they want to express future plans, present conditions, or past events.

### **1. the Use of the Simple Present**

Simple present tense is one of the tenses that are important to master. Wrong perception of this tense could lead to students' difficulties in constructing simple present sentences. Present time is seen either as the moment of speaking or writing, or as time around now, or as the more general, permanent time relating to truths and general facts (Carter and Carthy, 2006).

The uses of simple present tense are explained below.

- a. to express general truth  
eg: The sun rises in the east.
- b. to tell about fact  
eg: He works in a biscuit factory.
- c. to talk about habitual actions  
eg: I visit my grandmother on Saturdays.
- d. to express recent events  
eg: They have a new baby.

Simple present tense use adverb of time, adverb of place, adverb of frequency, etc. Here are the examples: always, recently, on Sundays, every day, etc.

### **2. the Use of the Simple Past**

Simple past expresses past events and conditions. The verb form used in this tense is past form. There are two kinds of past verb, the first one is regular

form and the other one is irregular form. In addition, past time is seen as time before the moment of speaking or writing, or as time around a point before the moment of speaking (Carter and Carthy, 2006). Simple past tense often uses adverb of time such as yesterday, a year ago, last night, in 1945, etc.

### **3. The Use of the Simple Future**

Simple future tense expresses events, situations, or activities in the future. It has two different verb forms; they are *will* and *be going to*. These two forms can give different meaning and context into sentences. Mainly, they are used to distinguish between planned and unplanned activities, for example:

a. planned activity:

I'm going to spend my next holiday in Sydney.

b. unplanned activity:

Please wait. I will pick up the phone.

Simple future tense uses several adverbs of time such as: tomorrow, next week, someday, in the future, etc.

## **D. Difficulties in writing**

### **1. Error Analysis**

As a teacher, we do know that errors were generally found in teaching learning process. It could happen since students might have not understood the material given by the teacher. This problem was not faced by students with good competence of English (Shzh-Chen,2008). In addition, Tajino in Shzh-Chen (2008) stated that there are three aspects of difficulties: linguistic

difference between L1 and L2, errors made by students, and linguistic complexity.

Researchers stated that English is foreign language for Indonesian learners. For this reason, there were so many errors occurred during the process of learning English. Mistakes and errors are defined differently. Errors occurred since students did not have the schemata or background knowledge, while mistakes were made after students had the background knowledge. As Brown (2000, pp 217) stated that:

A mistake refers to a performance error and it can be self-corrected. All people make mistakes, in both native and second language situations. Native speakers are normally capable of recognizing and correcting such “lapses” or mistakes, which are not the result of a deficiency in competence but the result of some sort of temporary breakdown or imperfection in the process of speech. Meanwhile, an error, a noticeable deviation from the adult of a native speaker, reflects the competence of the learner. An error that reveals a portion of the learner’s competence in the target language and error cannot be self-corrected.

It could be said that mistakes were made since the factor of product was less satisfying. It could happen since students did not pay attention to teacher’s explanation, or because the teacher’s explanation was not clear. Errors consist of two kinds:

a. interlingua error

This kind of error occurred because of L1 interference towards the target language being learned.

b. intralingua error

This error occurred because of students’ difficulty in learning the language itself (Richard, 1974).

It was also mentioned by Richard (1974) that factors caused intralingua errors were:

- 1) Over-generalization, i.e. the creation of one deviant structure in place of two regular structures.

Example: She is reads

He is walks quickly

(he use of double verbs)

- 2) Ignorance of rule restriction, i.e. application of rules to the appropriate context.

Example: This is the King's of horse which he rides it every day. (The learner uses "it" and ignores the rule restriction of the object use).

- 3) Incomplete application of rules, i.e. deviation of grammar, which describes the development level of rules which are needed to produce acceptable utterance.

Example: What does she tell him? Student's response "She tell him to hurry" (When a student responds, she/he does not use -s for expressing verb after subject he/she)

- 4) False concepts hypothesized, i.e. false understanding to differentiate the concept of the target language usage.

Example: He is speaks. (The learner learns that "is" is used to state a present event by ignoring the other rule restrictions).

## **2. Common errors**

It is a fact that Indonesia has L1 and L2. L1 is native or traditional language, while L2 is Bahasa Indonesia (e.g. L1: Javanese, L2: Bahasa Indonesia). English is considered as foreign language which is learnt at school. It has not been easy to teach English since students are still influenced by L1 and L2, especially in terms of phonology and grammar. Ellis (2004) in Iskandarwassid (2009) stated that L1 will influence other languages learnt. Moreover, there are many differences between Bahasa Indonesia and English in phonology, syntax, and also the morphology. This problem leads students to errors.

There are several kinds of errors found in writing skill since this skill is complicated. They are content, organization, vocabulary, language in use/grammar, mechanic (spelling, punctuation) (Nurgiyantoro, 2001:308). Errors which occurred in those writing elements analyzed to know students' errors in writing using simple tenses.

## **3. Surface Strategy Taxonomy**

To know the errors, analysis was needed. One of the strategies to get the explanation of error analysis is by using surface strategy taxonomy. Dulay (1981) in Suhendi (2012) explained that surface strategy taxonomy highlights the ways surface structures are altered: learners may omit necessary items or add unnecessary ones, they may miss form items or miss order them. It can be inferred that this taxonomy explains how students make grammatical error in their writing. Error locations analyzed using this taxonomy is omission,

addition, misformation/selection, and mis ordering.

a. Omission

Omission reveals errors done by students when they omit one important part in writing skill. As Dulay (1981) stated in Suhendi (2012), omission is a type of errors which are characterized by the absence of an item that must appear in a well-formed utterance. Here are the most common errors done by Indonesian students because of the influence of Bahasa Indonesia:

- 1) The omission of to be  
e.g.: She a doctor. (It should be: She **is** a doctor.)
- 2) The omission of article  
e.g.: I buy pen. (It should be: I buy **a** pen.)
- 3) The omission of –s for plural form  
e.g.: I see many book. (It should be: I see many **books**.)
- 4) The omission of –'s as possessive form  
e.g.: This is Tina book. (It should be: This is Tina's **book**.)
- 5) The omission of –s as verb  
e.g.: He never return. (It should be: He never **returns**.)

b. Addition

According to Dulay et al. (1981) in Suhendi (2012) error of addition is one kind of errors characterized by the presence of item which must not appear in a well-formed utterance. This is different to the first type of error, for the second type of errors is more emphasized to add one element that must not appear in a sentence. There are types of addition of error:

1) Double markings. This error occurred when students write something which is not needed in a sentence or students did not write something which must be added in a sentence. For example: She does not goes to Jakarta. The first sentence has 2 –s addition in a sentence and it should be added only one –s since there is “does” word.

2) Regularization. According to Dulay et al. (1981) in Suhendi (2012) explained that “a type of errors in which a marker that is typically added to a linguistic item is erroneously added to exceptional items of given class that do not take a marker”. It is for changing an item either verb1 will be verb2 (irregular verbs) or singular form will be plural form (uncountable noun). For example: speak (verb1) → spoke (verb2) and mouse (singular) → mice (plural). For the first item, the verb2 is not using speaked but using spoke and the second item, the plural form of mouse is mice not mouses.

3) Simple addition

It is occurred when students added an error, especially in using the form of uncountable noun of plural form such as fish (singular) → fish (plural). It has no different in which singular or plural form without changing the subject.

c. Mis formation (Error of Selection)

Dulay et al. (1981) in Suhendi (2012) stated that “mis formation errors are characterized by the use of the wrong form the morpheme or structure”. It occurs in the error of morpheme or structure use. In addition, it consists of

three forms: regularization, Archi-forms, and altering forms.

#### 1. Regularization

This form of error has similar definition with the first one on the form of addition error.

#### 2. Archi-forms

Based on Dulay et al. (1982) in Suhendi (2012) stated that Archi-form are those of selection of one member of a class of forms to represent others in the class. It occurred in the use of demonstrative pronoun in plural such as this book is mine → this books are mine (the correct sentence is These books are mine).

#### 3. Altering forms

This error is occurred when students did error in selecting the vocabulary.

#### d. Mis ordering

Dulay (1982) in Suhendi (2012) stated that mis ordering is characterized by the incorrect placement of a morpheme or group of morpheme in an utterance". For example: I do not know what is it. It should be: I do not know what **it is**.

### 4. Causes of Writing Problems

Actually, many students have problems in writing, especially for students of L2. Everything can be a cause of writing problem. Whether it comes from students' competence or the teaching skill, the whole would be the problems of writing skill. As Adas (2013) stated that the causes of writing problems are divided into 6 causes:

1. Al-Khsawneh (2010) in Adas (2013) indicated that the students identified that the teaching and the environment are the main causes of their weaknesses in English. Their weak qualification in English is either related to the lack of students' motivation or teacher's interest.
2. English language learners have limited vocabulary.
3. The present tense is the only used in their writing.
4. The students' writing is difficult to understand because of the ill-structured sentences in composition.
5. Students are unwilling to share their work with other students and they do not get the suitable feedback.
6. When the learners read their writing aloud, they could not distinguish whether what they read or write is right or wrong.

### **5. The Difficulty in Writing Simple Tenses**

There are only a few students who can write English well and carefully. Some of them may do not have any idea to start writing although some teachers have given the topic. If they have no idea, they will think and write something for a long time. In fact, Huwari, Ibrahim Fathi and Fadi Maher Al-Khasawneh (2013) at Taibah University stated that most of students felt overwhelmed when they were required to write on a certain topic. They did not know how to start, how to develop their ideas or how to conclude the essay. They also lacked the technical skills of writing acceptable compositions in English. Thus, it proves that grammar is considered difficult for some foreign students.

Both skill and knowledge of writing simple tenses are important yet are complicated. Of course, we will face some mistakes on the writing. As Widodo (2006) stated that grammar gains its prominence in language teaching, particularly in English as a foreign language (EFL) and English as a second language (ESL), in as much as without a good knowledge of grammar, learners' language development will be severely constrained. Practically, in the teaching of grammar, learners are taught rules of language commonly known as sentence pattern.

The most common problem in learning English is how to change "the verbs" or "to be" through the rules or formulas which is used in a given situation. One way to choose the verbs is that they must understand the meaning of the tense itself. By knowing the grammar skill, especially the tenses, the students can communicate their ideas fluently and correctly.

## **6. The Influence of Teacher's Teaching Skill**

A school is a place where teacher and students can communicate each other. The teacher can share the knowledge to the students. Moreover, each student can share the student's difficulties in lesson and can give opinion. Thus, the classroom will be more active. The students can gain the knowledge if they enjoy studying English. As a result, the teacher has to know the students' difficulties and make an interesting teaching technique.

For making good communication among teacher and students in a class, it needs a class which is comfortable, interesting, and interactive. Each aspect of learning process must support each other. All of these aspects have a

good impact for students and especially for teacher in developing teaching competence. Rusman (2011) stated that the base of teaching skill is a common characterization of teacher that relates to knowledge and skill/competence and it shows through an activity. It can be applied in some indicators as follows:

a. Introducing Skill

It is an activity which is done at the beginning of learning. It is important for knowing students' readiness in learning process.

b. Questioning Skill

It is the activity for improving students' participation in class and getting students to give opinion so that the class will be interactive.

c. Reinforcement Skill

It is a chance for teacher to give feedback and a reward to students who are able to answer correctly. Thus, the students can boost their motivation in learning the lesson.

d. Variation Skill

All students have different characteristic or learning style so that teachers need to use various teaching media.

e. Explaining Skill

Teaching is the activity in which teacher transfers the knowledge to all students. The teacher must be able to explain the material professionally.

f. Guiding of Discussion Skill

It is one of the ways to facilitate learning system that is needed by students in a group. It is aimed at involving students' interaction in learning process.

g. Class Managing Skill

It is a skill where teacher can create and maintain learning condition optimally. In this skill the teacher must know students' difficulty or problem in learning.

h. Guiding Individual Skill

It is a skill where the teacher gives guidance to each student so that the students' interest will be developed, especially in learning English.

i. Closing Skill

It is a stage when the teacher ends the class. Here, the teacher reviews the last material to students so that the teacher knows students' achievement in understanding the material.

## **7. The Importance of Interest in Learning English**

Students come to school only for studying so that they have a purpose for their future. Students must maximize their study time, both at home and school. Unfortunately, only few students can study well since the others face learning difficulties. This problem has something to do with students' interest in learning English.

Dalyono (2010) stated that learning difficulty is a condition where the students cannot study well. For each level of education, the students indeed have learning difficulty. Low interest might be as one of the causes of learning difficulty. This problem could get students frustrated as they found it hard to study without any interest.

Interest is one of the forms of learning motivation. Prendergast, Mark (2011) quoted from Hidi and Harackiewicz (2000) mentioned that interest is an interactive relation between an individual and certain aspects of his or her environment (e.g. objects, events, ideas). Both of them are related to each other, but they have a difference. Interest comes from students' character and motivation comes from outer of character. Everything can be done easily, if the things can support each other. In this case, teacher and students should support each other. For example, teacher should be well prepared so that students can easily grasp the material given. Teachers must be able to manage, control, and monitor the students during the teaching learning process. However, sometimes the teacher cannot make students understand the lesson because of low students' interest. In fact, the teacher still has a chance to overcome this problem. Teacher can add motivating strategy in his/her teaching learning process.

## **8. The Related Research**

There were some findings which were related to find difficulties in writing simple tenses, students' competence in writing simple tenses (simple present, simple future, and simple past), and also the causes of students' difficulties in writing simple tenses in SMA or SMK.

The researcher found some investigations which deal with main purpose of this study. The first is from Wahyuni (2007) in her study "an error analysis on using simple past tense in writing of the second year students of SMU Negeri 1 Purwareja Klampok in the academic year 2006/2007". It was

found that most of the students' errors in writing simple past were from tenses. In fact, the students were still confused in using tenses, especially, in simple past. The students usually face difficulties in changing the verb, such as verb 1 must be changed into verb 2. Besides, the least percentage of this finding is they could not use conjunction perfectly. Meanwhile, Mulianingsih (2014) in her study "an error analysis of students' English writing" found that the majority of grammatical errors were caused by mother tongue. The highest error was caused by tenses too. Both of those research results were almost similar, although they have different subjects. Because of those findings, the researcher would try to find and analyze students' difficulties in writing simple tenses in SMK N 2 Banyumas. Whether the students have different difficulties in writing simple tenses or not, the students exactly had some problems in learning English.

## **9. Basic Assumption**

Based on the explanation above, shifting verbs or using an appropriate *to be* in correct tenses is difficult for Indonesian students but it is important to study. If students want to write English well, they have to know writing aspects and master the tenses.

Teachers have to know students' interest to make the teaching learning process interesting for each student. Besides that, they have to know students' difficulties, especially in writing simple tenses and they can aid students in dealing with problems in learning English. Knowing students' difficulties of each lesson is very important for all teachers, because when teachers have known it, they can improve their teaching competence.