CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Research

In language mastery, both spoken and written skill, grammar is one of important points that can not be neglected. Grammar is a way in which we organize words, clauses or phrases into meaningful conversation and communication (Omutere: 2012). Grammar is the rule of language for forming words and combining them into understandable sentences. Cook and Sutter (1980:1) cited by Rahayu (2002) stated that grammar is a set of rules by which people speak and write. According to Swan (1988: xix), grammar is the rules that say how words change to show different meanings, and how they are combined into sentences. Based on those two statements from experts, we know that to be able to speak or write, we have to follow the rules (grammar) to make the language meaningful. Because English has different grammar with other languages includes Bahasa Indonesia, we should know how to construct sentences grammatically by considering the rules of English. Incorrect grammatical pattern makes the meaning changed and misunderstanding happens. So, to be able to produce good English, students must have a good grammatical competence. One of the grammatical items in English is gerund.

Swan in *Practical English Usage* (1988: xix) stated that gerund is the *–ing* form of a verb, used like a noun. The similar definition comes from

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Baehaqi (2005:163), gerund is verb+ing whose position or function changes it into a noun. Gerund can be positioned in many positions of a sentence (has many functions). For example gerund as a subject: _Reading books give us much knowledge._ But sometimes student's sentence is _Read books give us much knowledge._ They are also still confused to recognize which certain verbs should be followed by gerund. For instance student may write: _The girls enjoy play volleyball in the evening._ The word _enjoy_ should be followed by gerund, therefore the correct sentence is _The girls enjoy playing volleyball in the evening._ Because gerund has many functions as the example above, it is possible that there are some errors made by students.

Based on the depiction above that the students often make errors in using gerund, the researcher is interested in knowing whether the forth semester English Department students in Muhammadiyah University of Purwokerto have good mastery in gerund, what type of gerund that is considered the most difficult, and what type of error they make. Therefore, the researcher chooses the topic _"An Analysis of Students' Errors in Using Gerund in the Fourth Semester Students of English Education Department Muhammadiyah University of Purwokerto."_

B. Reasons for Choosing the Topic

There are some reasons for deciding the topic, as follows:

1. Grammar is very crucial aspect in mastering English.

2. Gerund is one of grammatical items that is often used in English. So, it is important to be mastered by the students.

3. Since there are various functions of gerund, the researcher assumes that certain type of gerund can complicate the students.

C. Problems of the Research

Based on the explanation on the background of the research, the problems to be discussed are:

1. In what category have the fourth semester English Education Department students mastered grammar, particularly in using gerund?

2. How is the order of gerund from the most difficult type to the easiest one?

3. What types of error mostly made by the students related to gerund?

D. Aims of the Research

The aims of the research are as follows:

1. To know the category of the fourth semester English Department students in mastering English grammar, especially in using gerund.

2. To know the order of gerund from the most difficult type to the easiest one.

3. To know the types of error mostly made by the students related to gerund.

E. Limitation of the Research

The research limits the scope of using gerund as subject, as direct object, as object of preposition, as complement, gerund after preposition, gerund after possessive adjective, and gerund after demonstrative adjective. It is based on the lesson materials that have been learnt by the forth semester English Department students.

F. Contribution of the Research

The researcher hopes that this result of research will be beneficial to everyone who reads this thesis. It can give useful information to everybody who wants to know about types of error tendency in using gerund and to give such inspiration to the next researcher who chooses gerund as the focus of his/her research. By using the explanation in this thesis, they are expected to do further research to find more that has not researched by the researcher.

G. Clarification of the Terms

Before going to the next chapter, the researcher gives some explanations about terms of the research to make easier in understanding the topic. The terms are clarified as follows:

1. Analysis of students' error

Analysis is defined by Hornby (2006:41) as the detailed study or examination of something in order to understand more about it. We can say that analysis is the effort of understand something through a series of process by examining part-by-part and their relationship, so that we can get understanding thoroughly.

Students, in this case the forth semester students, are those who have studied for two years in university.

Error is defined by Morries (1981: 445) as the condition of having incorrect or false knowledge.

So, analysis of students' error is clarified as an effort to understand the incorrectness made by the students related to the topic.

2. Gerund

According to Azar (1993: 150), gerund is the –*ing* form of a verb used as a noun. A gerund is used in the same ways as a noun, i.e., as a subject or object. In line with Swan (1983:xix), it is said that gerund is the –*ing* form a verb used like a noun.

Based on the definitions stated by the expert above, it is clear that gerund is the *–ing* form of verb which has function as a noun in sentences.