CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Framework

2.1.1 Grammatical Errors

There is a distinction between mistakes and errors. According to Corder (1967:167), mistakes are often made by native speaker of a language. They are caused by the failure to utilize a known system correctly. But errors are usually made by beginner of second or other language learners who do not yet have a full command of language system. Hoch (2007) stated that it is normal for the second language learners to have difficulty in recognizing their own errors. They often make errors in vocabulary and grammar.

Ellis (1997:19) stated that there are four ways to identify the learners' errors. The first is "omission" that means leaving out an item that is required for an utterance to be considered grammatical. Second, "overgeneralization", means that learners over generalize forms that they consider to be easy to learn and process. The third is "misinformation" means using one grammatical form in place of another grammatical form. And the last is "misordering" that means putting the words in a sentence in the wrong word order.

Next, we talk about grammar. Radford (1997:1) noted, "Grammar is traditionally concerned with the principles which determine the formation and interpretation of words, phrases, and sentences." Since the English grammar

represents a system of the language, the learners of English should learn how to master the grammar.

According to Lado (1984:53-54), the most common elements used in many languages to indicate grammatical structure are:

❖ Word order

For example, house-keeping is not the same as keeping house because in English the modifier –head relationship is signaled by the position of word which comes first (it becomes the modifier).

❖ Inflection

For example, we use the ending "-s" to signal plural as in star : stars, and the ending "-ed" to signal past time as in start : started.

❖ Correlation of form

The correlation of the inflection "-s" in verbs with a third person singular subject such as he, she, it, etc. For example: he walks; she walks; it walks.

The English grammatical rules provide the learners with a set of principal system, which allows them to construct acceptable English sentence. Grammatical errors particularly in writing, for second language learners is influenced by their first language attitude. Second language learners usually transfer sentences they make from their first language to other language. This will be explained in Language Transfer part.

2.1.2 Definition of Error Types

In this part, the writer only explained four types of errors that she has observed in students' work. The explanations of each type is completed with examples.

2.1.2.1 Articles

Articles which are part of a class of words called "determiners," are the little words "a," "an," and "the." As taken from English@EF Student's Book Seven (1999), article "a" and "an" are used:

- Before words beginning with a consonant vowel (*a*), and with a vowel sound (*an*).

  Examples: - **A little girl** is playing doll.

  - My mother is buying **an umbrella**.

- Before a count noun that we mention for the first time.

  Example: You need **a visa** to visit other country.

- With professions.

  Example: My neighbor is **a policeman**.

- With expressions of quantity.

  Example: We can see **a lot of people** on the beach.

- With some numbers.

  Example: I found **a hundred** dollars when I was walking on that road yesterday.

The article 'the' is used:

- When we mention something a second time.

Example: You need a **visa** to visit Moscow. **The visa** is about $ 100.

- With superlatives.

Example: Jayawijaya is **the highest** mountain in Indonesia.

- With first, second, etc.

Example: This is **the first** time I come to this place.

- With groups of people and families.

Example: Andrea Corr and Caroline Corr are personnel of **The Corrs**.

- With geographical names.

Example: They sail through **the Atlantic Ocean**.

2.1.2.2 Agreement

There are two types of agreement, the first is noun/pronoun agreement and the second is subject/verb agreement (http://www.sunysuffolk.edu/Web/Selden/OWL/grammaticalerrors.htm).

- Noun/pronoun agreement

In noun/pronoun agreement, the form of the noun and the pronoun must be equal in number/person/gender.

Examples: - **Mary** gives me **her** book.

- **People** like to do **their** hobbies in spare time.

To correct noun/pronoun agreement, determine if the noun that the pronoun is referring to is singular or plural. *Person,* a singular noun, requires a singular pronoun, *his* or *her*. *People* is a plural noun and requires the plural pronoun *their*.

- Subject/verb agreement

In subject/verb agreement, the subject and the verb must agree in number.

Examples: - **She writes** about natural disaster that happen lately.

- **They write** about natural disaster that happen lately.

Subjects joined by *and* (compound subjects) are usually treated as a plural subject and require a plural verb, but sometimes compound subjects take a singular verb when the subject is considered one person or one single unit.

Examples: - The company's **CEO and President is** planning to retire in June.

(CEO and President as one person)

- The company's **CEO and President are** planning to retire in June. (CEO and President as two people)

Every and *each* before singular subjects joined by *and* take a singular verb.

Example: **Every** person **has** a right to get good education.

Each does not affect the verb form if placed after a plural subject, although some writers use a singular verb when *each* follows a compound subject. Both are correct.

Examples: - A **bird**, a **butterfly**, and a **bee each have** wings to fly.

- A **bird**, a **butterfly**, and a **bee each has** wings to fly.

2.1.2.3 Passive Voice

In active sentence, the subject of the sentence performs the action of the verb and the direct object receives the action of verb. But in passive sentence, the direct object becomes the subject of the sentence and a passive verb (verb phrase of a form of the verb *to be*) is used.

Azar (1992:276) stated that form of all passive verbs is *BE + Past Participle*.

- The object of an active sentence becomes the subject of a passive sentence.

  Example: May gives **me** a pen. → **I** am given a pen by May.

- The subject of an active sentence is the object of *by* in the "*by*-phrase" in a passive sentence.

  Example: **May** gives me a pen. → I am given a pen **by May**.

- *The Past Participle* follows *BE*. For regular verbs, the past participle ends in –*ed*.

  Examples: - The pianist **plays** piano in her concert. → Piano **is played** by the pianist in her concert.

  - My sister **will buy** a book tomorrow. → A book **will be bought** by my sister tomorrow.

2.1.2.4 Tenses

According to Hornby (1975:78), tense stands for a verb form or series of verb forms used to express time relation. Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1983:62) pointed out:

> English tense is often correlated to the grammatical system because tense deals considerably with the form and meaning of English sentences … The meaning of tenses entails a language-specific way of dealing with the time and relationship of events and interlocutors to time.

Actually there are twelve kinds of tenses, they are:

- Simple Present
- Simple Past
- Simple Future
- Present Progressive

- Past Progressive
- Future Progressive
- Present Perfect
- Past Perfect

- Future Perfect
- Present Perfect Progressive
- Past Perfect Progressive
- Future Perfect Progressive

But in her thesis, the writer only corrected three types of tenses, they are: simple present, present perfect (progressive), and simple past because those three types are the most commonly happen in the students' work. The writer took the explanation of each type from Foo and Hamid (2006).

- Simple Present

    We use simple present tense to talk about:

1. Things in general.

    Example: The wood **flows** on the water.

2. Something that happens all the time or repeatedly.

    Example: Anita **goes** to supermarket every Sunday.

3. Something is true in general.

    Example: Water **boils** at 100º C.

    The form of simple present is: *S + V1 + O*.

- Present Perfect Progressive

    We use present perfect to talk about:

1. Activities or situations that occurred (or did not occur) "before now", at some unspecified time in the past.

    Example: I **have** never **visited** that place.

2. Activities that were repeated several or many times in the past. The exact times are unspecified.

   Example: Tina **has eaten** at that restaurant many times.

3. Situations that began in the past and continue to the present.

   Example: She **has lived** in this town *since* 1989.

And we use present perfect progressive when the duration of an activity is in progress.

   For example: My sister **has been talking** to her friend on the phone for fifteen minutes.

   The form of present perfect is: *S + has/have + V3,* and the form of present perfect progressive is: *S + has/have been + V ing*.

- Simple Past

   We use simple past tense to talk about:

1. Something that happened in the past.

   Example: She **went** to the bank *two days ago*.

2. Unlikely action.

   Example: They *wish* they **were** rich.

   The form of simple past is: *S + V2 + O*.

2.1.3   Language Transfer

   Language transfer refers to a situation where the learning of a skill in one language transferred to a second language. For example, learning English for an

Indonesian student will make his/her transfer his/her knowledge to form sentences from Indonesian into English.

It is a normal thing to do transfer from their own language when students begin to learn a foreign language. This happens mostly in elementary and intermediate levels (Harmer, 2001:131). Danchev (1982) argued that transfer is a natural phenomenon and a predictable part of second language acquisition. And according to Lado (1957:2), individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings and the distribution of forms and meaning of their native language to the foreign language.

Although some researchers believed that transfer done by almost all of beginners in learning a second language is normal, but some others argued that transfer is the least useful strategy. Hoch (2007) stated that there is often a big difference between what students can express in their first language and what they want to express in other language. This is caused by their limited knowledge in using correct word (diction) and correct grammar. Odlin (1989:26) noted, "Transfer … can still be regarded as padding, or the result of falling back on old knowledge, the first language (L1) rule, when new knowledge … is lacking." Most of second language students bring knowledge and experience of writing in their first language. They also bring the limitations of their knowledge of second language (Furneaux, 1998). Transfer from the first language leads learners to produce sentences that are possible in their first language, but might not be possible in the second language.

Transfer can be positive or negative, that is a previously learned event can either facilitate (positive transfer) or inhibit (negative transfer) the learning of a second event. According to Ellis (1985:22), transfer will be negative if differences between two languages lead to interferences that may finally result in the making of errors.

2.2 Review of Related Studies

Among many researchers, there are some that have almost similar topics with this research. The first research was done by Patricia Murrow (2004) in her paper entitled *Analysis of Grammatical Errors in Students' Writing –indicators for curricula enhancement-*. She analyzed essays written by the fourth year Technical English students of Matsue National College of Technology Japan. In doing her paper, she used Özbek's and Celce-Murcia's theories. Özbek stated that students are unable to make use of the grammar they know in composition course while Celce-Murcia stated that we must analyze virtually all of English grammar at the discourse level in order to teach the rules of grammar that will serve students when they read and write English for academic purposes. The result of her study showed that the students were unable to write freely about the topic given because they had insufficient useable grammatical knowledge to do so.

The second research was done by Zavitri Citra W. (2005) in her thesis entitled *An Error Analysis of the Tenses Made by the Second Grade Students of SMUN 4 Surabaya*. She explained about errors done by Indonesian high school students in Tenses. She only used five tenses in the study which are considered as

the core system (Simple Present, Simple Past, Simple Future, Present Progressive, and Present Perfect Tense). Her analysis was based on Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman's theory about the core system. In the study, she gave a complete description of the errors by presenting the erroneous sentences together with the correct answers and gave explanation for each sentence.

The third research was done by Li-Ling Chen (2006) in her article *The Effect of the Use of L1 in A Multimedia Tutorial on Grammar Learning: An Error Analysis of Taiwanese Beginning EFL Learners' English Essays*. She analyzed essays written by students of a private medical technology college which is located in southern Taiwan. The research question was there is a significant difference in students' written English error rates between the Taiwanese beginning EFL students who received CAI (Computer Assisted Instruction) with those who only received traditional instruction. The result of her study was indicating that there was no significant difference in overall error rates between students who received CAI instruction and those who only received traditional instruction. She also found that the use of English verbs was a major learning difficulty for all the subjects.