

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I.1. Background of The Study

Learning a foreign language in our society may not be extra-ordinary anymore since there are numerous people who learn it. Some people may, however, learn it because that particular language is broadly used in the field of education, government, or business. Some others most likely learn it as they consider that mastering a foreign language may well be strength in their resume. In particular, people now have come to realize that they will have greater career opportunities when they master a foreign language. Needless to say, learning a foreign language has inevitably become a necessity that has to be carried out by every person who wants to succeed in the international world.

As we may identify, the foreign language that is commonly learnt by Indonesian people, and has become a compulsory subject since in the elementary school is English. English, therefore plays innumerable roles in most facets of our daily life. More specifically, it is employed as means of communication in daily activities, both written and oral. For this reason, we should not be astonished when there are more job vacancies, which include English proficiency as one of their most important requirements.

In order to have English proficiency, people realize that the only way to do so is by learning. The process of learning is performed in various ways such as joining an English course, taking a private lesson or being a student of the English Department in a university.

Learning a foreign language, in this case English, may not be effortless for people as there are many processes involved in it. One of the most significant problems in acquiring a foreign language is the habit system of the native language. In other words, a learner who does not get accustomed to using the grammatical structures of English will be inclined to use the grammatical structures of his native language. It is similar to the experience of the writer herself, many students of the English Department are still influenced by the habit system of Indonesian before speaking or writing in English. In a brief description, they “think” in Indonesian when they make an English sentence, or in the most common terminology, *word-for-word translation*.

In relation to the problem above, a learner commonly experiences **language transfer** in learning a foreign language. Behaviorist learning theory predicts that transfer will take place from the first to the second language. As stated by Ellis (1985: 22), “Transfer will be *negative*, or in the most common terminology, *interference* if differences between the two languages lead to interference that may finally result in the making of errors.” On the contrary, transfer will be *positive* when the first and second language habits are similar. Consequently, no errors will occur.

According to Littlewood (1984: 23), “There are two kinds of errors that may result from language transfer.” First is the ‘*interlingual*’ that means errors made by transferring rules from the native language to the target language. The second one is ‘*intralingual*’, which means errors performed when students have already had sufficient knowledge of the target language.

Due to these facts, the writer finds it appealing to examine what kinds of grammatical errors made by the English Department students in Writing I class since writing ability, which automatically includes grammar capability, is always a requirement when the students are asked to make a composition, a letter, a report, and so on. Furthermore, writing can be used as evidence of successful learning as it can be examined and reviewed immediately. In the end, when a learner produces a composition, which has interferences from his native language, it will be considered improper.

I.2. Statement of The Problem

According to the phenomenon above, the writer would like to state the problems as follow:

1. What kinds of grammatical errors in Writing I made by the English Department students?
2. What is the most common kind of grammatical error in Writing I made by the English Department students?

I.3. Objectives of The Study

The objectives of this study are:

1. To find out kinds of grammatical errors in Writing I made by the English Department students.
2. To find out the most common kind of grammatical error in Writing I made by the English Department students.

I.4. Significance of The Study

The result of this study is expected to be beneficial for students, teachers, and those who are concerned with second language learning. Besides, this study will hopefully provide a better understanding of language learning process, particularly in relation to language transfer. Hopefully, after identifying what kinds of grammatical errors that may take place in second language learning, both the teacher and the students may employ this study as a consideration in determining materials for second language teaching.

I.5. Scope and Limitation

Limitation is essential in clarifying the core of the research and the matter of the study. Considering that the respondents are learners of English who have Indonesian as their native language, this study attempts to find the errors based on the transfer from the native language into the second language and the errors produced within the English language itself.

I.6. Theoretical Framework

1.6.1. Definition of Interference

According to Ellis (1985: 22), “Transfer will be *negative*, or in the most common terminology, *interference* if differences between the two languages lead to interference, which may finally result in the making of errors.” On the contrary, transfer will be *positive* when the first and second language habits are similar. In this case, no errors will occur.

“In doing a language transfer, a learner has to go through two stages, *interlingual* and *intralingual* transfer” stated Littlewood (1984: 23). *Interlingual* transfer is identified as the beginning stage of learning a second language, which is characterized by a good deal of transfer from the native language. *Intralingual* transfer occurs when the learner has already been familiar with the second language system.

1.6.2. Definition of English Grammar

Radford suggested, “Grammar is traditionally concerned with the principles, which determine the formation and interpretation of words, phrases, and sentences” (1997:1). Additionally, Lado in *Linguistics Across Cultures* (1957: 51) noted “Grammar means a set of absolute rules to which the language must adjust.”

Meanwhile, in accordance to Faibairn and Winch in *Reading, Writing, and Reasoning* (1996: 108), “Grammar is a set of rules to help you to construct sentences that make sense and are in acceptable English.”

The most frequent elements used in various languages to signal grammatical structure are:

- ❖ Word order.
- ❖ Inflection.
- ❖ Correlation of form.

1.6.3. Grammatical Errors

Ellis stated that “Errors reflect gaps in a learner’s knowledge; they occur because the learner does not know what is correct.” (1997:17). Moreover, Ellis (1997: 19) stated that errors may have different sources, they are:

- ❑ *Omission* means that a learner leaves out a part of a sentence in the English grammatical structure.
- ❑ *Overgeneralization* happens when learners over generalize forms that they consider to be easy to learn and process.
- ❑ *Misinformation* means using one grammatical form in place of another grammatical form.
- ❑ *Misordering* means putting the words in an utterance in the wrong order.

1.6.4. Contrastive Analysis

Contrastive analysis is the comparison of the structure of two languages and the mapping of points of difference. According to Ronald Wardaugh in Littlewood’s *Foreign and Second Language Learning*, in

discussing contrastive analysis, we should distinguish it into strong and weak claims (1984:21). The **strong form** claims that all second language errors can be predicted by identifying the differences between the target language and the learner's first language. The **weak form** claims that contrastive analysis can be used to identify which errors are the results of interference. In this sense, contrastive analysis may work hand in hand with Error Analysis.

1.6.5. Interlanguage

The term '*interlanguage*' was coined by Larry Selinker (Ellis, 1997:33) as the construction of a linguistic system that is drawn by second language learners, in part, on the learner's first language, which is different from it and also from the target language. In other words, the *interlanguage* system is a unique grammar that does not belong to either the source language or the target language.

1.6.6. English Writing

Learning to write well in either a first or second language is one of the most difficult tasks that a learner may encounter. Furthermore, learning to write well is a difficult and prolonged process that may cause anxiety and frustration in many learners since writing involves the processes of moving from concepts, thoughts, and ideas into the written language. As stated by Clark and Clark (cited in Richards, 1990: 101), "A written text represents the product of a series of complicated mental operations."

In second and foreign language programs, the teaching of second language writing has often been identical with the teaching of grammar or sentence structure. That is to say, writing serves to reinforce speech in that it stresses mastery of grammatical and syntactic forms (Raimes, cited in Richards, 1990: 106). Moreover, writing helps to solidify the students' grasp of vocabulary and structure; and complements other language skills.

Writing also can be used as evidence of successful learning as it leads to a product that can be examined and reviewed immediately. It provides feedback to the teacher and learner on what has been understood.

Good writing skills are essential to academic success and a requirement for many occupations and professions. In adult life, people's writing needs are both institutional and personal (Davies and Widdowson, cited in Richards, 1990: 100). Institutional writing is writing produced in a professional or institutional role, such as that of businessperson, teacher, or student, and conforms to institutional conventions. Personal writing includes personal letters and creative writing.

I.7. Method of The Study

The method applied in this study is descriptive qualitative analysis since the analysis is provided by the analysis of errors made by the students. The writer took the data by asking the students to write English composition. The data obtained is analyzed by using Contrastive Analysis, that is comparing the grammatical structure of English and Indonesian.

I.7.1. Definition of Key Terms

Key terms are quite necessary for understanding the whole study that is being discussed. The following are some technical terms used in this study:

- ❖ *Language transfer* is a process of transferring one's previous knowledge of language to the target language.
- ❖ *Interference* is something results from the differences between the native language and the second language.
- ❖ *Interlingual interference* is characterized by a good deal of transfer from the native language.
- ❖ *Intralingual interference* occurs when the learner has already been familiar with the second language system.
- ❖ *Calques* are errors that reflect very closely a native language structure.

I.7.2. Population and Sampling

The respondents of this study are the English Department students of Airlangga University who took Writing I. There were forty-eight students in the class of Writing 1. However, the writer merely chose twenty-five students to be the respondents of the research by using random sampling. The reason for choosing those who took Writing 1 is that they have only taken Structure 1.

I.7.3. Technique of Data Collection

In collecting data, the writer did several steps. First, she prepared five topics, which would be written by the students and consulted them to the

teachers who taught Writing I. The writer asked the students to write about their best or worst experience; motivation in joining the English Department; things they want to do after they graduate from the English Department; the person that may greatly influence their life; and the best place that they want to visit or they have ever visited. The writer chose those five topics based on a reason that those topics include many aspects of grammar, which the writer wanted to study. The topics for the composition were considered to be appropriate for the students' knowledge and their level of proficiency. Each student was only allowed to choose one of those five topics to be written.

After preparing the topics, the writer carried out the study. However, the study schedule had to be consulted with the teacher. Both teachers conducted the study so that the students did not know that they were the respondents of the study. This would help the students to do their best just like in the real exam. The test was carried out in thirty minutes. In the end, the writer chose twenty-five compositions that would be analyzed by using random sampling. In short, the steps in collecting the data are as follow:

1. Consulting the topics of the English composition and the study schedule to the lecturer of Writing I.
2. Asking the students to write a composition in accordance with some intended topics.
3. Selecting the intended composition randomly.
4. Selecting sentences that consist of grammatical errors.

I.7.4. Technique of Data Analysis

There were several procedures that the writer performed in examining the data. First of all, the writer selected sentences that consisted of grammatical errors. Secondly, she classified all those errors on the basis of the English grammatical rules. In accordance with the classification, the writer determined sources of each error. She also categorized the errors into two kinds of interferences, *interlingual* and *intralingual* interference. Afterwards, she computed the number of errors.

Before the writer analyzed the errors to find out the reasons why the respondents made them, she presented the data in tables. The last two procedures performed are correcting the errors and reconstructing the sentences; and interpreting the result. In summary, the steps in analyzing the data are as follow:

1. Classifying the errors on the basis of the English grammatical structures.
2. Determining sources of errors.
3. Categorizing the errors into two kinds of interferences.
4. Computing the number of errors.
5. Presenting the data in tables.
6. Correcting the errors and reconstructing the sentences.
7. Interpreting the result

I.8. Organization of The Study

The study is divided into four chapters. Chapter I tells about introduction, which comprises eight subchapters. They are background of the study, statements of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation, theoretical framework, method of the study and organization of the study. Chapter II encompasses literature review of the study. Chapter III entails presentation of the data, analysis of the data, and interpretation of the result. In the end, Chapter IV provides conclusion.

CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW