

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Communication in human life as social beings is surely very critical in order to interact with each other. One of the tools adapted by people to interact with their surroundings is language. In Indonesia, the official spoken and written language is called *Bahasa Indonesia*. However, throughout schools, students were taught other secondary languages as well, such as English and Mandarin Chinese because those two languages have the most widely spoken languages out of at approximately 7000 languages in the world (Kaufman, 2022).

As one of the most spoken languages in the world, Indonesian students have been taught English from nursery school level to university level, which shows how important English language is in Indonesia. In general, there are 3 forms of communication used by human beings, namely verbal communication, nonverbal communication, as well as written communication. However, in learning English, students are expected to master four skills namely reading, listening, writing, and speaking (Iswari et al., 2018:9). There are also official tests to measure someone proficiency in English, such as IELTS or TOEFL. Nevertheless, this research concerned with two types of essays, which are descriptive and narrative essays. In Indonesian's 2013 curriculum, there are actually three types of texts which students need to study, namely recount, descriptive, and narrative texts.

Furthermore, there are at least twelve types of tenses in English, such as simple present tense, present continuous tense, simple past tense, past continuous tense, present perfect tense, past perfect tense, present perfect continuous tense, past perfect continuous tense, simple future tense, future perfect continuous tense, future perfect tense, and future continuous tense (Gaspersz, 2019:4). However, this research will be focused on students' errors especially in writing essays using simple present tense and simple past tense because in reality, eighth grade students in Panca Budi Medan are facing difficulties in writing essays using simple present tense and simple past tense. As a result, there are errors found in their daily English assignments. This research is expected to help the students to improve their English writing skills, where students could write whole paragraph of essays using correct grammatical order.

Panca Budi institution is an educational institution located in the city of Medan, North Sumatra, at *Gatot Subroto St.* This school was founded back in 1961 and until now, Panca Budi educational institution has managed basic and secondary education starting from PG/TK or also known as nursery, SD or equal to primary school, SMP or equal to junior high school, SMA or equal to senior high school, and SMK or equal to concentrated senior high school.

Panca Budi junior high school itself was established back in 1967. As a school located in the heart of Medan city and accredited with A, the need for English language education for Panca Budi junior high school students is surely crucial in order to improve the quality of their students so they can compete with other schools. However, although English is considered as universal language, in reality, a lot of Indonesian students are yet to master the language, especially in terms of writing. Writing essays in English is a lot wider than just writing a sentence full of English vocabularies. In order for the essays to be deciphered and understandable, students must follow certain grammatical structure.

Moreover, there are some previous studies similar to this research. Through her research titled, "*Analisis Kesalahan Gramatikal pada Penulisan Descriptive Text Bahasa Inggris Siswa Kelas VII-A dan VII-B SMP Negeri 2 Parbuluan,*" Sinaga (2021) using Surface Strategy Taxonomy theory pointed out that through descriptive texts written by the students of *SMP Negeri 2 Parbuluan*, there were four types of grammatical errors made by the research object, such as omission (equal to 68,31%), addition (equal to 9,6%), misinformation (equal to 8,45%), and misordering (equal to 2,11%). In general, it can be concluded from research conducted by Sinaga (2021) that among all types of errors, the majority of students frequently made omission type of error.

On the other hand, Walasari et al. (2021) through their research titled "The Analysis of Grammar Error in Writing Descriptive Text for Seventh Graders" which also relied on the theory of surface strategy taxonomy found out that most frequent error made by seventh graders is omission (37,28%), followed by addition (29,66%), misinformation (31,35%), and lastly misordering (1,69%).

The weaknesses of students in Indonesia especially eighth graders who attend Panca Budi school medan when it comes to write essays has been a major issue, which is also one of the reasons the writers want to conduct research titled, "*An Analysis of Grammatical Errors (Simple Present Tense and Simple Past Tense) in the Essay Writing of Eighth-Grade Students at Panca Budi Medan*"

1.2 Research Problem

Based on the background of study, the problem of this research can be seen as following:

1. What are the grammatical errors in terms of writing essays using simple present tenses written by the eighth-grade students of Panca Budi Medan?
2. What are the dominant errors made by the eighth-grade students of Panca Budi Medan while writing essays using simple present tenses?
3. What are the grammatical errors in terms of writing essays using simple past tenses written by the eighth-grade students of Panca Budi Medan?
4. What are the dominant errors made by the eighth-grade students of Panca Budi Medan while writing essays using simple past tenses?

1.3 Objective of Study

Through the stated research problem prior, following are the objectives of this research:

1. To know about the grammatical errors in terms of writing essays using simple present tenses written by the eighth-grade students of Panca Budi Medan.
2. To know which errors in simple present tenses made by the eighth-grade students of Panca Budi Medan dominantly.
3. To know about the grammatical errors in terms of writing essays using simple past tenses written by the eighth-grade students of Panca Budi Medan.
4. To know which errors in simple past tenses made by the eighth-grade students of Panca Budi Medan dominantly.

1.4 Significance of Study

There are two types of significance this research is expected to provide, such as the following.

1.4.1 Theoretical Significance

Theoretically, this research could be beneficial to support previous studies regarding to the grammatical errors found in students' essays, especially errors in writing tasks which involve simple present tense and simple past tense. In addition, this research can also help students to improve their writing skills so errors in written tasks could be avoided or decreased.

Through this research, students and teachers or other related parties could also be informed about the errors in writing essays using simple present tenses and simple past tenses.

1.4.2 Practical Significance

On the other hand, practically, this research could be:

1. This research could contribute to students and lecturers majoring in English language education study program as references regarding to grammatical errors topics.
2. This research could provide other researchers further knowledge about the grammatical errors found in essays, especially the errors in simple present tenses and simple past tenses.
3. This research is expected to explore the most common mistakes in writing essays using simple present tenses and simple past tenses.
4. The research results could be used as references for future researchers if they conduct similar studies.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

1.5.1 Scope

The scope of this research is to assess grammatical errors made by the eighth-grade students who are currently studying at Panca Budi Medan. Furthermore, not only assessing the errors in writing essays using simple present tenses and simple past tenses, but this research is also expected to analyse which errors are dominantly made by the eighth-grade students while writing their essays.

1.5.2 Limitation

The researchers are aware that this research is limited to several aspects, such as the following:

1. The object of research is limited to the eighth-grade students who are currently studying at Panca Budi Medan. Where, the research results might be slightly inaccurate and/ or biased due to small population.
2. This research has limited focus area, where this research focused on grammatical errors only in narrative or descriptive essays which were written by the students using simple present tenses and simple past tenses.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

1. Error

Error reflects gaps in students' knowledges. Error occurs due to the limited knowledge of students about which is correct and incorrect (Ellis, 2001:17).

2. Simple Present Tense

Simple present tense refers to a sentence that follows the format such as the following:

Subject + Auxiliary verb / to-be (is, am, are) + Complement

Simple present tense is also used in a sentence to express or describe about something which is common, or it can also be used to express something that always happens over and over again, or a general truth.

3. Simple Past Tense

Simple past tense refers to a sentence that follows the format such as the following:

Subject + Auxiliary verb / to-be (was/were)/ verb 2 + Complement

Simple past tense is also used in a sentence to express or describe about something which happened in the past and ended in the past.