

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### **A. Background of the Research**

One of the four major skills in English that the students need to develop is writing. Writing is a fundamental skill in English language and also an important part of communication. It can be described as a complex process of conveying information, ideas and expression through written forms. Tarigan (2002) stated that writing is an activity that utilizes written language as a mean to communicate information and ideas. Tarigan (2002) further added that writing means turning thoughts, opinions, and idea into a written medium. Furthermore, Perkins (2005) stated that writing is the development of an individual's cognitive awareness, and it is a process that requires a person to use the knowledge at the disposal to form a piece of writing. Writing itself can be seen as an activity to express oneself and organizing one's thoughts. It offers an opportunity for an individual to increase and explore creativity. It is also a powerful tool to help an individual to develop and thrive in many different settings.

The process of writing heavily involves an individual's knowledge and cognitive ability to produce written texts. According to McKay (2008), writing is both a process and product, and it encompasses planning, drafting, editing, and revising procedure that writers undergo to form a piece of writing. Richard and Renadya (2002) also stated that the writing process encompasses planning, drafting, revising, and editing. To further add, the process of writing also requires an individual to arrange words and construct phrases and sentences in a certain manner

and set of rules of the said language. Therefore, in order to produce a good piece of writing, a writer has to go through a series of procedure that aids in organizing ideas and polishing the content of the writing.

Writing is an intricate process and a time-consuming activity. Many find it to be challenging and difficult. There are reasons as to why writing is arduous. Ghaith (2002) stated that writing is a complex thought process that requires a writer to explore thoughts and ideas, and then turn it to be visible and concrete. The process of writing ranges from organizing information, choosing appropriate vocabularies, and constructing arguments. These procedures are time-consuming, and it demands attention to detail that makes it as one of the contributing factor of the difficulty in writing. Furthermore, Rass (2001) stated that writing is considered as a difficult skill because a writer has to deal with multiple issues such as organization, content, purpose, vocabularies, and mechanics in order to produce a piece of writing. Moreover, selecting the right words to express thoughts and ideas are also one of the few reasons as to why writing can be seen as a strenuous task, and oftentimes a writer faces difficulty in employing words that corresponds with the intention in mind. However, despite the difficulties, writing is an essential and ever-changing skill, and through practice, writing proficiency can be improved and refined to tackle writing challenges so that an individual can produce a good piece writing.

Various forms and genres of writing exist, and according to the syllabus and the lesson plan of the tenth grader of senior high school in Indonesia during the academic year of 2023/2024, narrative text is one of the learning material that the

students need to learn and master. Narrative text is a piece of writing that tells the reader about a story. It aims to entertain and indulge the reader to the story that it presents. It is usually written in an engaging way and in a sequence as the events of the story develop. Narrative text can be in a form of a short story, a fable, a fairytale, a legend, and many more. The characteristics of a narrative text itself are easy to identify. Most narrative text has a set amount of characters, a setting to contextualize the story, a plot that serves as a device for the story to progress, and a theme that can be described as the central idea of the entire story. These characteristics are put together in order to indulge and let the reader experience everything that is transpired in the story.

Narrative text is often written in past form. This is because narrative text usually depicts stories that have already happened at some point in time. The use of past tense helps the reader to grasp the sense of time and sequence of the story, and as the result, the reader will have an easier time to follow the progression of the story. Additionally, by using past tense, it allows the writer to present the context and an apparent connection between the action of the characters and the results of their action. This somewhat can help the reader to experience what characters of the story are going through and understand the plot better.

Using simple past tense to write a narrative story does have its difficulty. Students, especially those who do not speak English as their native language, tend to face difficulty in using simple past tense to write narrative text. The issue starts as soon as the students attempt to write in a language that is not their native language, which in this case is English language. This is because writing in another

language is an entirely different thing as the rules of the said languages are like worlds apart. The lack of understanding of the grammatical rule and poor understanding of the English language as a whole also further worsen the issue. It is clear that the students will commit errors and mistakes in utilizing simple past tense to write a narrative story.

Based on the background above, it is apparent that most students still find it difficult to use and employ simple past tense in the correct way to write narrative text. Therefore, the researcher is interested to conduct a research under the title “An Error Analysis on the Use of Simple Past Tense in Narrative Text at Tenth Grade of SMKN 6 Padang”.

## **B. The Identification of the Problem**

Based on the backgrounds above, the researcher manages to identify some of the problems based on this research phenomenon such as the students face difficulty in using simple past tense to write a narrative text, and they make a lot of errors in using simple past tense to write a narrative text.

## **C. Limitation of the Research**

The research focuses on analyzing the errors that the students commit in using simple past tense, especially the use of to be (was, were) and the use of verb tense (irregular, regular verb), in writing a narrative text.

#### **D. Research Question**

Based on the identification of the problem above, the researcher conclude the problem of the research in the following.

1. What type of error that the students make when using simple past tense to write a narrative text?
2. What is the most frequent errors that the students make when using simple past tense to write a narrative text?

#### **E. The Objective of the Research**

Based on the research questions above, the objective of the research can be seen in the following.

1. To find out what type of error that the students make when using simple past tense to write a narrative text.
2. To find out what is the most frequent errors that the students make when using simple past tense to write a narrative text.

#### **F. Significance of the Research**

Once this research has finished, the researcher wishes this study to contribute to the improvement of teaching and learning of English verb especially past tense.

## 1. Theoretical Significance

### a. For the Teacher

The researcher believes that this study can help the teacher to recognize and identify the students' errors and difficulty with the usage of simple past tense. By classifying the types of errors found in the students' writing, this research is expected to aid the teacher in understanding the way that such errors are occurred. Also, this research is believed to help the teacher to pinpoint specific areas where students struggle with the simple past tense in narrative writing.

### b. For the Students

This study is expected to enlighten the students by acknowledging their areas of difficulty when using the simple past tense in narrative writing. By understanding the types of errors found in their writing, this research can encourage the students to avoid future errors by recognizing their language usage patterns. Also, this research can promote feedbacks on where the students need improvement.

## 2. Practical Significance

### a. For the Teacher

The researcher hopes this study can help the teacher to become more familiar with the students' writing and ability in utilizing English grammar. In addition, this research is expected to be able to aid the teacher in teaching English grammar more effectively after knowing what errors that the students tend to commit.

b. For the students

The researcher wishes this study could help the students to become more aware of their writings and their use of English grammar. Through this research, the researcher hopes that the students can further improve and learn more about English grammar especially past tense in order to avoid error and mistake in the future writing.

## **G. Definition of Key Terms**

In order to prevent misunderstanding, the researcher has defined the key terms that are used in this research,

### 1. Error Analysis

An error analysis is a process to determine the error made by language learners in order to find out the strategies they use to study a foreign language and to address the issue that they face.

### 2. Simple Past Tense

Simple Past Tense is a verb tense that is used to indicate an action or something that has already happened in the past.

### 3. Writing

Writing is a cognitive activity that entails the process of turning ideas and thoughts into written form.

### 4. Narrative Text

Narrative text is a kind of text that tells the reader about a certain story that is often entertaining and engaging.