

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of study

English is an international language that is also referred to as the "lingua franca" in Latin. Language has a significant impact on many facets of life, including intellectual and societal development. In Indonesia, students studying English are expected to be proficient in all language skills, including English Language Education students. They must be able to communicate effectively in English. The primary focus of English language learning is on language mastery competence to reach a functional level in oral and written communication.

During the English language learning process, students concentrate on acquiring the four macro skills of the language: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Speaking and writing are productive skills, but listening and reading are receptive ones. In line with that, Richards and Renandya (2002) as quoted in Ratnaningsih (2016), stated that writing is the skill that is most difficult for second or foreign-language learners to master. According to Phuket (2015), English as a foreign language (EFL) students find it very difficult to master writing skills. This is because writing abilities necessitate knowledge of numerous linguistic components outside of language, which constitutes the essay's substance. Learning to write is typically linked to developing writing skills. Students can get more comfortable utilizing language knowledge, such as grammar, vocabulary, style, spelling, and so forth, through writing and composition tasks in English language instruction.

The process of conveying the contents of thoughts in written form requires cognitive aspect skills to do so (Maskor & Baharudin, 2016). Writing skills not only require a large vocabulary to compose a paragraph but also require correct grammar, without paying attention to other writing rules, so that it can be understood. For students, writing paragraphs is not an easy thing. Apart from that, writing is an ability that students need to practice regularly. According to Sapkota (2012), as quoted in Harris, Ansyar, and Radjab (2014), writing is the activity of transferring graphic symbols to present a language to convey a meaning so that readers can understand the information conveyed by the writer. It is very important to communicate with others in written form for readers. In other words, it is a means of communication with other people. Writing is also an art because the writer can express and tell what is on his mind through written form. Furthermore, according to Nunan (2003), writing is the ability to arrange words and sentences, think about how to arrange them and arrange them into paragraphs so that readers can understand them. In conclusion, writing requires a higher level of critical thinking to create sentences.

In the English learning process, there are several types of texts taught to students, one of which is descriptive text. Descriptive text is writing that is used to describe something as if it can be seen, heard, or felt directly by the reader. Kane stated this descriptive text describes an object that can be seen, touched, or felt. (Kane, 2000). As Husna said, information about an object will be very useful in describing that object in detail (Husna, 2015). Moreover, students must understand the grammar used to convey ideas in writing descriptive text.

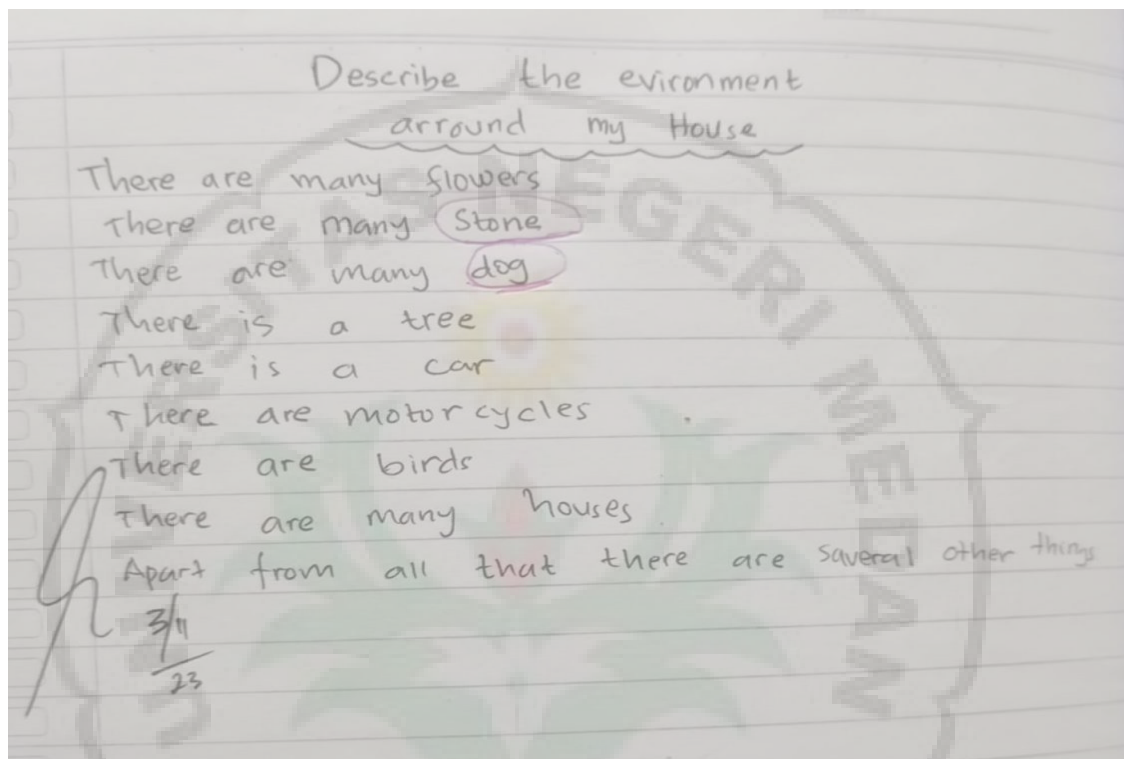
Descriptive text explains something that could happen seen using the five senses, heard, and felt using the body parts.

The general structure of Descriptive text consists of three parts, namely general description, section description, and conclusion/impression. The social function of descriptives is to describe certain people, places, or objects (Gerot & Wignell, 2001). To create descriptive text, students must master tense. Descriptive text has language features; when students write them, they must understand adjectives, verbs, and nouns to use them correctly. Creating descriptive text challenges students to describe a real or unreal object based on the object's physical characteristics (like places, objects, animals, etc) Students must understand what they are describing in their writing.

Based on the preliminary observation of class VIII students of SMP Negeri 5 Percut Sei Tuan, the researcher found several students errors in writing descriptive text. These errors can be seen in the assignments previously given to students to describe the environment around their homes. The results of the students' writing can be seen as follows:

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Text 1



Picture 1.1 Omission Error

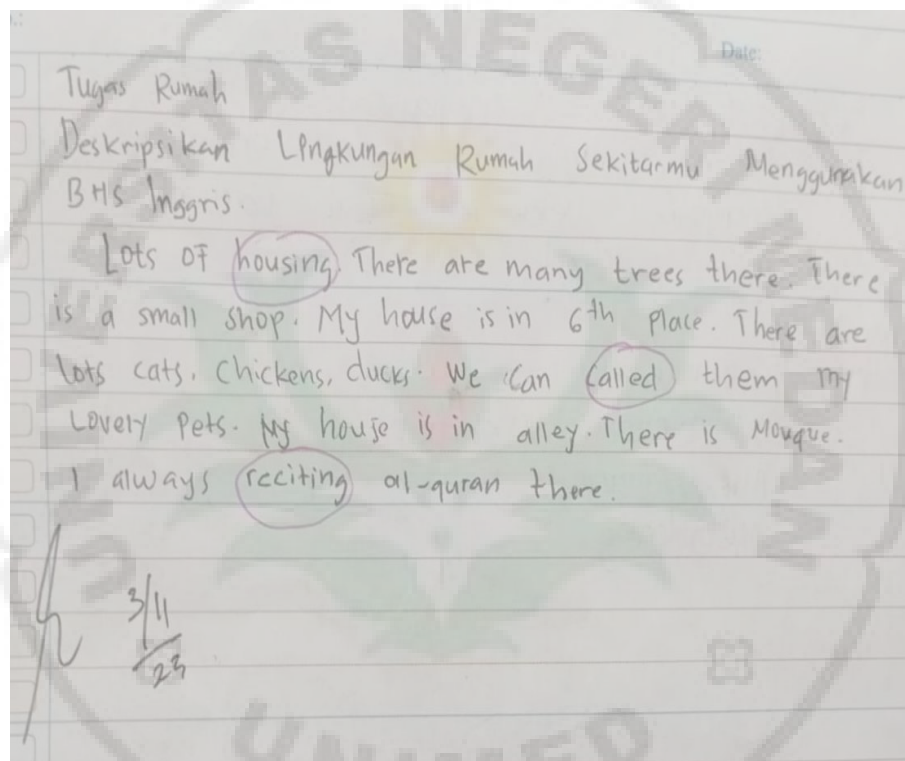
There are many Stone (omission)

There are many dog (omission)

The error above is an omission because the student does not add (s) at the end of the plural noun. “*There are many stone*” the expression “there are” refers to a plural noun which means more than one but the student only writes the noun (stone) by not adding (s) behind the plural noun thus making the sentence classified as an omission error. The correct sentence is “*There are many stones*”. The same error is also found in the sentence “*There are many dog*” which should be “*There are many dogs*”. Many students have difficulty in writing correct sentences because there are “rules” in writing that confuse students in expressing

their ideas. For example, students find it difficult to express ideas using correct grammar.

Text 2



Picture 1.2 Addition Error

Lots of housing (addition)

We can called (addition) them my Lovely Pets.

I always reciting (addition) al-quran there.

The text above contains additional errors because the student wrote the sentences and used the wrong tenses. The phrase “*Lots of housing*” is considered an additional error because “lots of” is usually used for countable nouns, while “housing” is an uncountable noun. In standard English, “lots of” should be followed by a noun that can be counted one by one. The sentence should be “*Lots of houses*” if the sentence refers to individual units, or use “*a lot of housing*” to

be uncountable but still grammatically accurate. The same error is also found in the sentence *"We can called"* including an addition error because it uses the wrong verb form. Supposedly, after the modal "can," the verb used should be in base form. The correct sentence is *"We can call."* The use of "called" here is in the past tense, which is incompatible with the use of the modal "can." . The next error is found in the sentence *"I always reciting Al-Quran there"* including an addition error because the word "reciting" is not used correctly after the word "always." After the word "always," the base form of the verb should be used, not the progressive form. The correct sentence is *"I always recite the Al-Quran there."* By changing "reciting" to "recite," the sentence becomes grammatical, and by the use of verbs

Meanwhile, spelling is the ability to form words correctly, consisting of several written or spoken letters (Farooq et al., 2012). Many students have difficulty memorizing spelling in English. Compared to Indonesian spelling, English is more difficult for foreign language students to learn. Because there are several English vocabulary words that are written differently, but the pronunciation is almost the same.

Apart from that, the researcher also conducted interview with an English teacher at the school who explained that students there often forgot to add (s) when writing plurals. They often experience difficulty in conveying the meaning they want to convey through their writing which often results in loss of information in the text they write and it is not uncommon for students to have difficulty making initial identification as part of the descriptive text structure.

From the teacher's statement, the researcher found that there were internal and external factors that caused students to make mistakes in writing descriptive text. Therefore, researcher is interested in conducting this research with the title " STUDENTS' ERRORS IN WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT OF THE EIGHT GRADE AT SMPN 5 PERCUT SEI TUAN " by using the theory of Corder's (1981) states four types of (sentence) error, namely: error of omission, error of addition, error of selection, and error of ordering. And the theory of reason for errors from Norrish (1983) which states that there are three reasons for errors, namely carelessness, first language interference, and transalation.

1.2 The Problems of the Study

Based on the background of the study, the researcher formulated the problem of the study as:

1. What types of errors do students make in writing descriptive text?
2. What are the reasons why students make errors in writing descriptive text?

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

Based on the explanation stated above, this research is aimed to:

- a. To analyze the types of student's error in writing descriptive text
- b. To find out the reasons why students make errors in writing descriptive text

1.4 The Scope of Study

The limitations of the research are only to find out the types of students' errors in writing descriptive text, and then the reasons why students find it difficult and make error in writing descriptive text. This research focuses on types of errors according to the theory of Corder (1981) and causes of error according to Norrish (1983)

1.5 The Significances of the Study

It is anticipated that the research's conclusions would enhance the efficient process of teaching and learning English.

1. For educators: to serve as a guide and a means of self-evaluation for educators with regard to their performance in the classroom, in order to enhance their pedagogical skills and broaden their understanding of students' circumstances on the inside as well as the outside.
2. For students: as a guide for enhancing their aptitudes and methods of acquiring the language so that they are passionate, enhance their ability to write descriptive texts, and are inspired to engage in more active English study than they previously had.
3. For researchers: The results of this study can serve as a helpful guide for scholars and members of the academic community who wish to investigate the kinds of error that students make.