

I. INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes background of the problem, formulation of the problems, objectives of the research, uses of the research, and scope of the research. In order to avoid misunderstanding, definition or terms are provided in the last part of this chapter.

1.1 Background of the Problem

English is one foreign language learnt at schools in Indonesia. Referring to KTSP 2006, one of the goals of English KTSP for senior high school students is the students must be able to develop communication competence in written as well as spoken to achieve information literacy level. Students should practice intensively so that they will be able to use English communicatively both in oral and written form.

Writing is considered as the most difficult language skill to master. This is true since this language skill requires the skill of organizing ideas, putting the right vocabularies and using grammar as the structure of the composition (Meyers, 2005:2). This productive skill can develop and increase English students' ability. By writing a paragraph, the students can share or express their ideas. The students can write their paragraph in the descriptive, expository and narrative paragraph. Treanor (1987:87) states that a paragraph, whether it be description, exposition, or

narration, is based on two major factors: thoughts and expressions. Thoughts in this statement refer to ideas. Meanwhile, expressions refer to things that people say, write or do to show their feelings, opinions, or ideas. The narrative paragraphs can explore the students' ability in English. The students call the actor (it can be they themselves), tell about what happened with them, how and why that event happened in their life in a form of story.

Referring to School Based Unit Curriculum 2006 (KTSP 2006) for senior high school, the students' activity in learning process is focused on four skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. In learning four language skills of English the students also learn the language components such as vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar. Grammar is important aspect of the language which should be mastered in order to reach standard mastery of the four language skills. Grammar is used not only in spoken but also more importantly in the written form. In English, grammar refers to the pattern and form and arrangement by which the words are put together. Tense is important point in grammar. Tense is a part of grammar. Therefore, teaching tenses is one of the important points in teaching grammar.

In Indonesia English is learnt as a foreign language; Students of senior high school learn English in their school for about three hours a week. This condition supports the students to have short times in learning English. Moreover, the students do not always use English in their daily communication. It invites the students' difficulties in learning English even though they have learnt English for years. They learn English since the first year of junior high school. Even, some Elementary schools in Indonesia begin their English subject for the students from

the fourth grade. As a result, even though the students have learnt English for years but they have short time in learning English at school and they do not use English in daily communication and it causes the students get difficulty to express or communicate their English in the written and spoken form. This fact is proved by researcher's experience during her field practice / PPL (Praktik Pengalaman Lapangan) in SMA Negeri 4 Bandar Lampung. When the researcher gave the writing task, the students got difficulties in expressing their English. The result of the task shows that the students still make errors in the use of tense. This is the example of the spoof text made by student of SMA N 4 Bandar Lampung :

In the morning, there is a man who has big muscle bring a big knife on his shoulder walking on the village (1). Next morning, as usual, the man walking in the village but this time some people pay attention to the man (2). The man surprised and approach the old woman (3). The man said "what problem with me?" (4). The old woman feel afraid cause the man bring big knife on his shoulder (5). The old woman said scarily. "oh my god, forgive me" (6). The man was getting closer to the old woman (7). The old woman said again. "I want to die now! (8)". The man was arrived on the places where the old woman stand up (9). And the man said "I iust wanna ask where is way to the forest?" (10).

From the text above, it is known that there are some errors made by the student. The tense in the text as language feature used in spoof text is past tense except for the direct sentences that are signed by quotation. But in the paragraph, it is found that the student still used present tense or even inappropriate diction or vocabulary choice. In first sentence, the student must use "was" as "be" and "had" as past form of "has". In second sentence, the student made omission of "was". Then, in third sentence, the student used inappropriate diction "approach" that should be replaced by "come closer". In fourth sentence, the student made omission of "is". In fifth sentence, the student made misformation of verbs "feel" and "bring" that must be changed by "felt" and "brought" as the past form of verbs. Meanwhile, "cause" is incomplete spelling of "because". In ninth sentence, the student made

addition of "be" (*was*). In the last sentence, the student used misformation of past form of verb "wanna" that should be replaced by "wanted".

The study of tense errors which has been done by Indrati (1998) indicates similar problem. Students of SMUN 2 Bandar Lampung experienced difficulty in using tense in writing paragraph. The students made regularization in their paragraph writing. They used suffix -ed for irregular verb form 2. In accordance with the result above, it can be revealed that the students' tense is still a problem in using English.

However in learning process, when the students explore their English ability, it is possible for them to make errors in their writing because, making error is a part of learning process. This is supported by Dullay et.al (1982:138) that errors are the flawed side of learner speech or writing. They are those parts of conversation or composition that deviate from selected norm of mature language performance.

The teacher should realize that the students make errors in the process of learning. When the students learn English, language structure of their first language influences their English language product. It means that when someone learns target language, the structure of his or her first language influences his or her English mastery. However, making errors in the target language is not only influenced by the first language structure but also other factors such as target language models and carelessness.

Analyzing the students' error is important to evaluate or develop the appropriate material and technique in teaching learning process. Corder (1967) in Richard (1974:25) mentions that the students' errors provide evidence of the system of language that he is using at a particular point. Students' errors are significant in

three different ways: (1) to the teacher, to know how far towards the goal the student has progressed, (2) to the researcher, to know how language is learned or acquired, what strategies or procedure the students is employing in her discovery of the language, and (3) to the student as a device the student used in order to learn.

In accordance with the description and analysis of errors above, it can be seen that the student still has problem in using tense. Furthermore in this study, the researcher investigated past tense as one of basic tense that is used in narrative writing.

1.2 Formulation of the Problems

In accordance with the background previously presented, the researcher formulates the problems as follow:

1. Are there errors of past tense in senior high school students' narrative paragraph writing?
2. What types of errors are made by students in using the tense in their narrative paragraph writing?
3. How is the proportion of the errors?

1.3 Objectives of the Research

The objectives of the research are:

1. To find out whether there are errors of past tense in students' narrative paragraph writing at class XI IPA 2 of SMA Negeri 4 Bandar Lampung.

2. To identify the types of tense errors made by students in writing narrative paragraph.
3. To find out the proportion of the errors.

1.4 Uses of the Research

The results of this research can have the following uses:

1. It can give clear description of tense errors in students' narrative paragraph writing.
2. It can give clear description of types of tense errors in students' narrative paragraph writing.
3. It can be used for the teacher to improve the teaching learning process.
4. It can be used for the students to improve their narrative paragraph writing by minimizing the errors of tense based on data.
5. It can be used to design remedial material on tense.

1.5 Scope of the Research

The research focused on tense errors in students' narrative paragraph writing. In this research, past tense is investigated as an English basic tense which is used mainly in constructing narrative paragraph. The errors in students' narrative paragraph writing were analyzed based on surface strategy taxonomy and

communicative effect taxonomy. The subjects of the research are students of class XI IPA 2 of SMA Negeri 4 Bandar Lampung. Referring to English syllabus for SMA, the second grade of SMA students had already learned about structure and vocabulary in the semesters before.

1.6 Definition of Terms

In order to avoid misunderstanding, definition or terms are provided as follows:

1. *Error* is any deviation from a selected norm of language performance, no matter what the characteristics or causes of the deviation might be (Dullay et.al., 1982).
2. *Error Analysis* is an analytical tool, as are the specification of transitional constructions, the computation of acquisition orders, and the delineation of special utterance types (Dullay et.al., 1982).
3. *Writing skill* needs several components to master, including: word choice, grammar, syntax, mechanics, and organization (Gebhard, 1996). (1) *Word choice* dealing with the choice of efficient word for the writer's purpose. saying exactly what he means to say, most simply and most directly, to the audience he is addressing, (2) use of *appropriate grammar* (such as *subject-verb agreement*, that the subject and verb in a sentence must agree in person and number; *tense*. time in relation to the writer's point of view; and *article use*. covering the use of 'the' and 'a/an'). (3) *syntax* (the facility to use the grammatical system of standard edited English in such categories as sentence structure, word form, word order, verb sentence, etc.), (4) *mechanics* (dealing

with spelling, abbreviations, use of capital letters, hyphenation and punctuation), and also (5) *organization of ideas* into a coherent and cohesive form focusing on organizing sentences so that each paragraph should have its own controlling idea and unity, its own full development, and its own structure with well-ordered parts and coherence.

4. *Narrative paragraph* is a paragraph that describes an event or a series of events, feeling or experience whether real or fictitious in story form or in the order the details of the event happened. In other words, the logical arrangement of ideas or sentences in narrative paragraph writing is chronological based on time order (Bushel, 2004).
5. *Tense* is frequently described as the property that relates to the time a verb's action is performed (Veit, 1986).