

I. INTRODUCTION

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

1.1 Background of the Problem

Errors are the flawed side of learner speech and writing. They are those parts of conversation or composition that deviate from some selected norm of mature language performance. Teacher and mothers who have waged long and patient battles against their students' or children's language errors have come to realize that making errors is an inevitable part of learning. People cannot learn language without first systematically committing errors (Dulay et al, 1982:138).

In line with the statements above, the students at school often find difficulties to acquire foreign language caused by the different systems of the native language and the target language. Senior High School students as the learners of English as foreign language face problems because of the different system between Bahasa Indonesia as the native language and English as the target language. Their problems are reflected in the errors they made in their speaking and writing.

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 is 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. In this case, there are many students who still get difficulties in expressing their ideas; this may be caused by the lack of knowledge about paragraph writing. Chomsky in Brown (1980:15) states that errors are the result from a lack of knowledge of the rule of language. It means that when students make errors, it is unconscious process because they do not know the correct form of the errors they make, especially in English writing as a part of English lesson.

In learning English, most of the students get many problems in written form. They face many problems in learning foreign language, especially on grammatical categories. One of the problems is in the use of prepositions. Sometimes, they use wrong prepositions or substitute a preposition for another and the other times they omit the prepositions altogether. It indicates that preposition often cause difficulties in written English. For example, Anggraini's research (2000) in SMUN 1 Metro Lampung Tengah shows that the students made a lot of errors in

using preposition, for example: *There is a television in the table.* The preposition *in* is inappropriate in the sentence. It should be changed by preposition *on* that shows the place.

In fact, certain preposition in Indonesian can be described by different prepositions in English. For example, the relationship in place indicated by *di*, such as *di rumah, di Bandar Lampung, di dinding*, can be described by *at, in, on*, respectively, i.e. *At home, in Bandar Lampung, on the wall.* It shows that preposition in Bahasa and in English are apparently different. During the PPL program, the researcher found out that the students made errors in using preposition. The students told to the researcher that they did not know the use of preposition appropriately.

Prepositions as we have learned in our earlier English studies are very important to the writing and to the speaking of good English. The preposition is the link which connects the words and phrases of a sentence in various special relationships (Wishon and Burks, 1980:12). Writing will be bad without using appropriate preposition. For example: *I sit between all of the students.* The usage of preposition "*between*" is inappropriate. In this sentence, preposition "*between*" is used for two things or persons. The appropriate preposition is "*among*" since among is used for more than two things or persons. So, the correct sentence should be: *I sit among the students.*

Pateda (1989:35) states that error analysis can lead the teacher to know the kinds, the sources, and the causes of the students' error in writing paragraph. By investigating students' errors in using preposition in writing, it is expected the

students can improve their English in the future. In this case, the teacher can help them by conducting error analysis. It is hoped that the teachers will be able to know how far the students have mastered certain material and what difficulties are produced in their learning process. Besides that, it is important that the teachers show the students' errors so that they can determine the method or technique that should be used in teaching. The purpose is to improve the students' knowledge so they may minimize making errors.

Surface strategy taxonomy highlights the way surface structure are altered: students may *omit* necessary items or *add* unnecessary ones: they may *misform* items or *misorder* items. Analyzing errors from surface strategy perspective holds much promise for researcher concerned with identifying cognitive processes that underlie the student's reconstruction of the new language. It also makes us aware that the student's errors are based on some logic. They are not the result of laziness or sloppy thinking, but of the student's use of interim principle to produce a new language (Dullay et.al 1982: 150).

A research done by Anggraini (2000) at the second year of SMU I Metro Lampung Tengah focused on analyzing students' errors in the use of preposition in writing indicates that students committed errors under umbrella of surface strategy taxonomy. The highest errors happened in addition errors (5.93 %) and the lowest ones occurred in misordering errors (0.44%).

A previous research was also done by Handayani (2001) entitled An Analysis of Studens' Error in Using Preposition of Place in their Sentence writing at The Second Year Student of SLTPN 2 Bandar Lampung which shows that the second

year students of SLTPN 2 Bandar Lampung still made a lot of errors in their writing. The errors consist of addition (45.12%), misformation (38.21%), and misordering (16.67%).

Based on the finding above, the students still make a lot of errors in using preposition in their writing. In this research, the researcher focused on the students' errors in using preposition in writing, because according to Wishon and Burks (1980:288) prepositions have been called the biggest little words in English. They are usually quite short and insignificant looking, but they have very important functions. Problems might come up when the students try to use them in writing because of their lack of grammatical knowledge that is the knowledge about the difference between Indonesian and English preposition.

Realizing the fact mentioned above the researcher was interested to identify and classify the students' errors in using prepositions in writing based on Surface Strategy Taxonomy (Dullay, 1982) at the first grade of SMAN 3 UNGGULAN MARTAPURA OKU TIMUR. This research will give good contribution for remedial teaching of grammar especially in term of preposition, so that the students' preposition mastery can improve. Since preposition is a part of structure.

1.2 Formulation of the Problem

Based on the background of the research, the problem was formulated as follows:

“What types of errors do the students make in using preposition in writing based on surface strategy taxonomy?”

1.3 Objective of the Research

In line with the problem formulated above, the researcher proposed the objective of the research as follows: “ to identify and classify the types of errors the students make in using preposition in writing based on surface strategy taxonomy.”

1.4 Uses of the Research

This research is expected to give the following uses:

1. The result of this research is expected to confirm the previous theories about error analysis.
2. As information about the types of errors based on surface strategy taxonomy made by the students in using preposition in English writing.
3. As basic consideration for improvement of teaching and remedial material.

1.5 Scope of the Research

The researcher focused on students' errors in using preposition in writing based on surface strategy taxonomy. The subjects of this research were the first grade students of the 2nd Semester at SMAN 3 Unggulan Martapura Oku Timur , during 2010/2011 school year. The researcher used free writing task to get the data in

relation to the types of errors based on surface strategy taxonomy. The preposition was analyzed is all of prepositions appearing in students writing.

This research treats any deviation from the selected norms committed by the students as an error (Dulay, 1982:139). In this research, the researcher considered all of the deviations of preposition made by the students in their writing as error. *Surface strategy taxonomy* which is classified into omission, addition, misformation and misordering, then used as the basis for classifying and analyzing students' errors in using preposition in their writing.

1.6 Definition of the Terms

In order to avoid misunderstanding, some terms used in this research are defined 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 (Dulay, 1982: 170).
2. Error analysis is a process or steps in the analysis of the flawed side of learner writing that deviate from some selected norm of mature language performance (Dulay,1982: 132).
3. Surface strategy taxonomy is the classification of errors which highlights the ways surface structures are altered. (Dulay, 1982: 150).
4. Preposition is a word or a group of words often placed before noun or pronoun to indicate place, direction, time, manner, etc. The preposition has the function of connecting a noun or a pronoun to another word, usually a noun, verb or adjective (Frank, 1972: 171)

5. Writing is a process of expressing ideas and thought of the writer using knowledge of the structure and Vocabulary to combine the writer's ideas.
(Raimes, 1983: 76).