

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter presents any reviews of related literature, including the nature of writing in language learning, traditional English grammar, and roles of errors in writing.

A. The Nature of Writing in Language Learning

In language learning, linguistic skills are very basic things developed. Listening, speaking, reading and writing are common skills that language education practitioners often work with. Developing all those skills is very important since language function is a mean of communication, and communication means the application of those skills.

August and Shanahan (2008: 51) state that in building each skill, learners need to build some related aspects as well. Compared to other skills, writing involves more structural aspects to consider. In reading, for instance, pronunciation and intonation are the only aspects strongly counted, in which speaking also deals with the both aspects.

Quoted from Wright (2006: 4), it is stated that speaking and writing are productive skill by the mean people express ideas by producing language in oral form or written form. Speaking and writing may have some similar characteristics, such as consideration of grammar, organizing idea, and some other linguistic features (like pronunciation and intonation in speaking, or

punctuation and capitalization in writing). Thus, it can be concluded that both speaking and writing consider grammar aspect.

The difference is that language in writing is more detail than that in speaking. Oral language typically tends to have non-complete sentences, less specific vocabulary, and loose grammar. In other hand, written language attends much to the mechanics of writing (spelling, capitalization, and punctuation) and grammar rules (O'Malley and Pierce, 1996: 58 and 136). The statement above can be proved by seeing the use of language both in daily or school. The practice of the use of oral language, for instance in contextual learning, which nature is the reflection of real life, tends to be looser in grammar aspect than that of written language.

Milroy (in Bex and Watts ed., 1999: 27) adds by implying that the distinction between written and spoken language is that the written is more formal in sense of sequences and its well-formed characteristic which is structurally called grammatical, rather than the spoken which tends to be ungrammatical or ill formed.

Written language means that it is recordable. What needs emphasizing is that the "recordable" nature makes this written language can be analyzed in detail which then leads probability of analyzing for the need of editing and redrafting. Grammar aspect as one of element which can be analyzed takes a vital place in writing. It does not mean that writing is the only language form which put grammar as an essential part; some speaking does so, but some genre or types of text does need good compositions of grammar so that the text can be categorized

into a good one. Report, exposition, persuasive and other scientific writing are some types that need deep checking of grammar. Thus, Nunan (1999: 280) also says that the differences of function and/or communicative purposes on the use of language determine overall shape or structure of the discourse, and grammatical as well.

Burns and Joyce (in Nunan, 1999: 278-279) add that unlike spoken language which tends to be unrehearsed and spontaneous, writing is editable and redrafted. Writing also put grammar as important point. That means that writer has space in which he/she can check and recheck his/her writing composition, including checking grammar, in order to minimize the possibility of making error or mistakes. It is necessary to know that without doing those checking and editing, writer may make unintentional errors (in grammar). The “unintentional errors” meant are any errors which actually the writer has understood or known how the correct construction should be. The writing process is very detail. The product of writing which has passed some basic writing steps (rechecking, redrafting or editing) should tend not to have the unintentional errors which means lacking grammar proficiency. A synthesis is then can be created which states that any grammar errors in writing may strongly indicate someone’s proficiency in grammar. In simple words, if writer still makes any errors after applying some editing or redrafting steps in writing, it can be concluded he/she has lack proficiency of grammar.

B. Traditional English Grammar

Martin and Rothery in Cope and Kalantzis eds. (1993: pp. 137 – 153) explain that traditional grammar is that which has been used in school. This means that learners concern with what called as standard English. Thus, their learning is based on correct “textbook” grammar. It’s also specified that traditional grammar tends to be used in writing rather than speaking (for speaking, especially regular conversation, it tends to use functional grammar). Important matters about traditional English grammar which can be helpful in this study are (1) types of grammatical errors and (2) sources of errors.

1. Types of Grammatical Errors

Many references have given the same distribution. Davydova (1977: 9-10), Spilner (1991: xi-xii) and Corder (1967: 160 -170) divide the errors into *omission, addition, substitutive (formation) and word order*.

a. Omission

It is any form of the absence of an item that must appear in a well-formed utterance. It includes the omission of:

- 1) Noun and verb inflections (the {-s} in pens, {-ed} in *called*, etc.)
- 2) Articles (a, an, the, etc.)
- 3) Verb auxiliaries (is, are, do, does, can, may, have, etc.)

For example:

a.1 Randy bought some book.

a.2 Sandra is student.

a.3 Tim not attend the Mathematic class yesterday.

The error in **a.1** is characterized by the absence of {-s} in word *book*, which should be in plural form since it is initialized by plural article *some*. It then constructs *Randy bought some books*. Based on grammatical rule, article *a* should be put before *student* in sentence **a.2**; *Sandra is a student*. Auxiliary *did* should be placed to form the negative form in past tense; *Tim did not attend the mathematic class yesterday*.

b. Addition

Any unnecessary morphemes which appear in an utterance are then classified into addition error. They are three types of addition errors:

- 1) Double marking
- 2) Regularization
- 3) Simple addition

For example:

b.1 Toby doesn't likes drinking milk.

b.2 Tim caught some fishes.

b.3 I am go to school every day.

The underlined words are the words that must be omitted (like in **b.1** and **b.3**) or may only contain particular morpheme which must not appear in the construction (like in **b.2** in which *fishes* is a wrong construction since *fish* (as a noun) does not have any {-s} inflection to form the plural function.

c. Substitutive error (misformation)

Substitutive errors are characterized by the use of wrong form of the morpheme or the structure.

For example:

c.1 Ben and John is in the library to finish their task.

c.2 The boy has eated 5 times so far this afternoon.

c.3 Luke can shoots precisely.

In **c.1**, auxiliary used is should be *are* since the subject is plural. Sentence **c.2** is wrong because *eat* doesn't put inflection {-ed} to construct its past participle form, but *eaten*. After the modal *can*, in **c.3**, the form of verb should be back to its base, without any inflection, thus, it should be *Luke can shoot precisely*.

d. Word order error

It refers to any incorrect placement of a morpheme or a group of morphemes in an utterance. This may happen in both sentence and phrase.

For example:

d.1 My teacher English.

d.2 Clarence doesn't know who is he.

Based on grammar rules, phrase **a.1** should be composed as *My English teacher*. The same goes for **d.2**, which contains a noun clause. Thus, it should be composed as *Clarence doesn't know who he is*.

2. Sources of Errors

The errors can be seen from some perspectives. Lott in Rahayu (2006: 28) divides the error sources into *interlingual* and *intralingual*.

a. Interlingual errors

This kind of error tends to be caused by the reflection of first language (L1). Thus, the learners' constructions of second language (L2) are influenced by their L1.

b. Intralingual errors

Richards (1997: 6) defines the intralingual into the errors that don't reflect the structure of the mother tongue, but generalizations based on partial exposure to the target language. In Rahayu (2006: 29), Richards distinguishes the source of interlingual error into the following categories:

1) Overgeneralization

This occurs when the learners compose an utterance based on certain or particular exposure of target language. For example, after being exposed to verb form of third person singular, a learner composes the following sentence:

- Budi doesn't goes to school.

Or in forming a plural form as in:

- They have many childs.

2) Ignorance of rule restriction

It involves a failure to perceive the restriction of existing structures when rules are extended to other context. For example, the

learner may use object form of pronoun as subject or vice-versa which means s/he ignore its restriction.

- Monkeys like they.
- Me have the picture.

3) Incomplete application of rules

This occurs as the learners do not use all the rules. The learners find that he can have successful communication by using simple rules rather than more complex ones. The learners tend to apply some of the rules and continue to make deviation to make themselves easily understand. For example, learners may make deviation in ordering subject and verb “be” a noun clause.

- We know what are they.

4) False concept hypothesis

It is errors derived from faulty knowledge of TL distinction or inaccurate ideas about language rules. For example, learner cannot distinct that plural noun should be substituted with pronoun “they”, instead of “it”, as in:

- Birds live in bevy. It travels together.

C. Roles of Errors in Writing

Seen from more general perspective, term “errors” is included under the term “mistakes”. Bartram and Walton (1991: 1) state that mistakes can be categorized into “errors”, “slips”, lapses” and, of course, “mistakes”. The discussion of error leads to its main characteristic which tends to any deviation that relates to

structural aspect. It is based on Nunan (1999: 307) who defines “error” as a piece of speech or writing that is recognizably different in some way from native speaker usage, which can occur at the level of discourse, grammar, vocabulary, or pronunciation.

Corder in Gass and Selinker (1994: 67) also explains the characteristic of error. While mistakes are akin to slips of the tongue and recognizable (by the mistakes maker), error is systematic in which it is likely to occur repeatedly and is not recognized by learner. However, the main purpose of this discussion is to explain how the errors can be useful in language teaching. Thus, thought in the discussion will not distinct the “errors” to other categories since they are still included into the same group, mistakes, and basically all put the same important contribution, although the points viewed are various.

Bartram and Walton (1991: 13) propose that mistake is the evidence of learning. Learning is progressing stages and learners do lot of things including making mistakes. In those stages, learners tend to make generalization by the correction toward their mistakes. Corder in Richard (1997: 25) adds that a learner’s errors might provide evidence of the system of the learned language at a particular point in the course. Learners make progress, for instance, by being able to revise writing they have made.

1. We can to work together. (Students make an error)
2. We can work together. (Students revise)
3. We will can do it. (Students make another error)
4. We will be able to do it. (Students revise)

The progress made by the learners can, then, be seen by looking at the language constructions they have made, specifically at the errors. If, then, the fact is connected to the role of grammar in writing, it comes to the conclusion that any errors in writing are very significant for the need of students' writing progress.

Nunan (1999: 58) also puts "making errors in language activities" as one of characteristics of good language learner. It is based on the fact that learners who make mistakes and then receive treatment (toward their mistakes) could possibly perform better understanding at the particular areas.

Bartram and Walton (1991: 1) state that mistakes are of crucial and central importance in teaching languages. However, there should be an action toward the mistakes; why students make them, and how teacher can deal with them. Bartram and Walton (1991: 19) again add that it is teacher's job to aid the process, including the making of errors.