

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Error**

In process of learning a language without realizing it error occurs. The fact that error appears in product of learning language such as in writing which is written by students couldn't be denied. George (as cited in Ellis, 1996: 47) states second language learners' errors are usually considered as 'unwanted forms'. Furthermore, in writing which is usually written by English department students who are considered learning English deeper than others, it also can be found some errors. Obviously, errors are something in common because they are the faulty side of learner speech or writing (Dulay, 1982: 138). Additionally, Ferris (2011: 3) considers that errors in student writing are the deviation of rules of the target language in morphological, syntactic, and lexical forms which is violating the expectations of literate adult native speakers. Referring to the discussion, it can be considered that errors are unwanted forms in learner speech and writing which deviate rules of the target language.

On the other hand, sometimes we think that errors are similar with mistake but Brown states that both mistake and error have different meaning. Mistakes are referred to as performance errors that mean the learner recognizes the rules but fails to use it, while errors are the result of the incorrect of learner competence (Brown, 2007: 258). From that explanation it is expected there is no errors resemble mistakes and vice versa. Similarly, Corder (as cited in Ellis, 1996: 51) noted that the difference

between errors and mistakes. An error occurs when the deviation arises as a result of lack of knowledge (lack of competence), whereas a mistake occurs when learners do not succeed to perform their competence (the problem that makes learners from accessing their knowledge of a target language rule).

It can be seen that mistakes can be corrected by ourselves if we do self-correction while errors can't be corrected by ourselves due to our lack of knowledge. So, it is necessary to do an error analysis about particular errors that emerge as side effect in learning a language.

### **2.1.1 Types of Error**

According to Corder (1981: 36) errors can be classified into four. They are error of omission, error of addition, error of selection, and error of ordering.

First, errors of omission occur when one element should be there but it isn't. There are two types of omission that always occur. It occurs in content morphemes and grammatical morphemes (Dulay, 1982: 154). Nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs are the content morphemes. "Content morphemes are sometimes called open class words because we can and regularly add new words to these classes" (Fromkin et al., 2003:73). For example, *John is a sailor*, the example *John* and *sailor* are content morphemes that convey major meaning. Whereas, *is* and *a* are grammatical morphemes that convey minor meaning. Grammatical morphemes are class words that do not have clear lexical meaning or obvious concepts associated with them

(Fromkin.et.al., 2003:73), it includes conjunction such as *and*, *or*, and *but*; prepositions such as *in* and *of*; the articles *the*, *a/an*, and pronoun such as *it* and *he*. These kinds of words are called function words because they have a grammatical function. For example of error of omission is *Sun shines brightly* it can be seen that there is omission *the* before the word *Sun*.

Second, errors of addition occur when one element shouldn't be there but it is. It is obvious that errors of occur as the learner has already acquired some target language rule (Dulay.et.al, 1982: 156). For example, *She didn't went*, it seems that there is addition past tense in the verb *went*.

Third, errors of selection occur when the speaker or writer is wrong to put the right item in the right place. In addition, Dulay (1982: 158) who calls it misformation said that it is different from omission where the items are not supplied at all, in errors of selection; the student supplies something even though that is incorrect. For example *I seen her yesterday* it can be seen that the student wrote the right verb but in the wrong form of tense.

The last, errors of ordering occur when the right elements are put in wrong order. Errors of ordering are typically related to tenses. Usually errors of ordering are caused by the first language since the student made errors that are word-for-word translation of first language surface structure (Dulay.et.al., 1982: 163). For example: *What that is?*

### 2.1.2 Causes of Error

This study uses two types of causes of errors, they are interlingual and intralingual.

Interlingual errors are similar in structure to a semantically equivalent phrase or sentence in the learner's native language (Dulay, 1982: 171). To identify an interlingual error, researchers usually translate the grammatical form of the learner's phrase or sentence into learner's first language to see if similarities exist. For example, if the learner produced *Dog eat it* the researcher would translate the grammatical form *The dog ate it* into Spanish *El perro lo comio*. Then compare both sentences to see if the learner's first language structure is discernible in the second language sentence.

The errors which reflect the general characteristics of rule learning are called Intralingual errors. Intralingual errors are classified into overgeneralization, incomplete application of rules, false concepts hypothesized, and ignorance of rule restriction (Richard, 1970: 5).

Overgeneralization generally involves the creation of one deviant structure in place of two regular structures, for examples, "*He can sings*", "*We are hope*", "*it is occurs*". Then, an example of incomplete application of rules can be seen in the question forms. Very often they are used, not to find out something, as they should, but as a means of eliciting questions through a transform exercise. Next, false concepts hypothesized are something due to poor gradation of teaching items. The form '*was*' for example, may be

interpreted as the marker of the past tense, as in “*one day it was happened*”. And the last, closely related to the generalization of deviant structures is failure to observe the restriction of existing structures, that is, the application of rules to context where they do not apply. *They man who I saw him* violates the limitation on subjects in structure with *who*. This is again a type of generalization of transfer, since the learners is making use of previously acquired rule in a new situation.

## **2.2 Error Analysis**

Since 1970s error analysis has become important part of applied linguistic (Alhaysony, 2012: 56). Richards and Schmidt (as cited in Mungungu, 2010: 19) defines error analysis is “the study and analysis of the errors made by second language learners”. In addition, error analysis is the process to observe, analyze, and classify the deviations of the rules of the second language and then to reveal the systems operated by learner (Brown, 2007: 259). Furthermore, error analysis replaced Contrastive Analysis, which looked for the errors that learners make by identifying the linguistic differences between their first language and the target language whereas error analysis provided a methodology for examining learner language (focus on the target language) (Ellis, 1999: 47).

In a whole, it seems to be error analysis is the study of the errors that provided a methodology for examining learner language through the process of observing, analyzing, and classifying the deviation of the rules of the second language.

The error analysis serves the several functions such as to (a) find out how well someone knows a language, (b) find out how a person learns a language, and (c) obtain information on common difficulties in language learning, as an aid in teaching or in the preparation of teaching materials (Richards as cited in Hasyim, 2002: 43). In conducting error analysis, the writer is going to follow the steps suggested by Corder (as cited in Ellis, 1999: 48), they are: 1) Collecting of a sample of learner language 2) Identification of errors 3) Description of errors 4) Explanation of errors and 5) Evaluation of errors.

## **2.3 Articles**

### **2.3.1 Generic Nouns: *a* or $\emptyset$**

Generic nouns are used to make generalization. A whole class of things is represented by a generic noun; it is not a specific, real, concrete thing, but rather a symbol of a whole group (Azar, 1999: 112).

Singular count noun

(a) A strawberry is red.

Plural count noun

(b)  $\emptyset$  Strawberries are red.

Non count noun

(c)  $\emptyset$  Fruit is good for you.

In (a) and (b), the speaker is talking about any strawberry, all strawberries in general. In (c), the speaker is talking about any and all fruit, fruit in general.

Notice that zero article ( $\emptyset$ ) is used to make generalization with plural count nouns, as in (b), and with non count noun nouns, as in (c).

### 2.3.2 Indefinite Nouns: *a* or *an*

Indefinite article points out a referent (something in reality pointed out by a noun) which is new, unknown, or unfamiliar thing (Brinton, 2000: 110).

Azar (1999: 112) noticed that “Indefinite nouns are actual things (not symbols), but they are not specifically identified.”

Singular count noun

(a) I ate a strawberry.

Plural count noun

(b) I ate some strawberries<sup>1</sup>.

Non count noun

(c) I ate some fruit.

In (a), the speaker is not referring to ‘this strawberry’ or ‘that strawberry’ or ‘the strawberry you gave me.’ The speaker is simply saying that he or she ate one strawberry. The listener does not know nor need to

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<sup>1</sup> The plural or non count equivalent of *a/an* is sometimes determiner *some* (Quirk.et.al., 1985: 274).

know which specific strawberry was eaten; it was simply one strawberry out of that whole group of things in this world called strawberries.

According to Brinton (2000:111) the major uses of *a/an* are the following:

1. for something mentioned for the first time;
2. for something which cannot or need not be identified: (*I want*) a friend;
3. for a generic referent: (*He is*) a teacher;
4. equivalent to ‘any’: a (*any*) good book;
5. equivalent to ‘one’: *a week or two*; and
6. for converting a proper noun to a common noun: *a virtual Mozart, another China.*

### 2.3.3 Definite Nouns: *The*

Definite article points out a referent which is known, familiar, or recognized to the speaker and hearer (Brinton, 2000: 110). It can be used before any noun, singular, count, and non-count, as long as the noun is specific.

Azar (1999: 112) noticed that “a noun is definite when both the speaker and the listener are thinking about the same specific thing.”

Singular count noun

(a) Thank you for the strawberry.

Plural count noun

(b) Thank you for the strawberries.



Non count noun

(a) Thank you for the fruit.

In (a), the speaker uses *the* because the listener knows which the specific strawberry the speaker is talking about, i.e., that particular strawberry which listener gave to the speaker.

Notice that *the* is used is used with both singular and plural count nouns and with non count nouns.

According to Brinton (2000: 110) in wide outline, the major uses of *the* are the following:

1. For something previously mentioned: *yesterday I read a book.... The book was about space travel;*
2. For a unique or fixed referent: *the Prime Minister, the Lord, the Times, the Suez Canal;*
3. For a generic referent: *(I love) the piano, (We are concerned about) the unemployed;*
4. For something which is part of the immediate socio-physical context or generally known: *the doorbell, the kettle, the sun, the weather;*
5. For something identified by a modifying expression either preceding or following the noun: *the grey horse, the house at the end of the block;* and
6. For converting a proper noun to a common noun: *the England he knew, the Shakespeare of our times, the Hell I suffered.*

## **2.4 Error in the Use of Article in Students' Writing**

Writing in English for second language learners is considered as one of the productive skills that learners demonstrate their knowledge and proficiency (Basoz and Aydin, 2011). there are some things that have concern in term of fluency and accuracy in the areas of grammar in writing. The written accuracy in this case is in the use of article which is sometimes ignored by second language learner because they do not know when to use it. Indonesia is one of many countries which the first language does not have article. So, learners usually find it difficult to understand how article used in English.

According to Parrot (2000: 32) the reason why second language learners keep making mistake is “because they don’t know or haven’t internalized the rules, or they haven’t learned the fixed expression. They may also transfer rules for using articles in their own language, inappropriately, to English.”

Based on those problems Richard (1970) had selected errors in the use of article which occurred in non-native English speaker. Richard (1970: 31) categorized errors in the use of article taken from some his studies and the results are as follow:

## **Types of article errors**

### **Omission of *the***

- a. Before unique nouns
- b. Before noun of nationality
- c. Before nouns made particular in context
- d. Before a noun modified by a participle
- e. Before superlatives
- f. Before a noun modified by an *of-* phrase

### ***The* used instead of $\emptyset$**

- a. Before proper names
- b. Before abstract nouns
- c. Before noun behaving like abstract nouns
- d. Before plural nouns
- e. Before *some*

### ***A* used instead of *the***

- a. Before superlatives
- b. Before unique nouns

### ***A* instead of $\emptyset$**

- a. Before a plural noun qualified by an adjective
- b. Before uncountable
- c. Before an adjective

### **Omission of *a***

- a. Before class nouns defined by adjectives

## **2.5 Conceptual Framework**

Based on the explanation above, the writer then built the conceptual framework for this study which aimed to find out the types of errors, the frequency of errors, and the causes of errors made by undergraduate students of English in using articles in their essay.

The types of errors in the use of article will be found out by using the theories from Richard (1970) and Corder (1981). Corder mentioned generally errors that

emerge in second language learner; they are errors of omission, errors of addition, errors of selection, and errors of order, but since this study problem is about the article usage so the errors of order will be omitted. Furthermore, Richard made it in more detail by selecting errors in the use of article into seventeen types so that the errors can be identified easily. The categorizing of the error types is aimed to give teachers understanding about students' learning difficulties and as the preparation of teaching materials. Then, the frequency of errors in the use of article will be calculated by using percentage calculation so it will be found what kind of error types that often appear. The last, the causes of those errors will be found out to see why learners making such error. Thus, this study used the theories from Richard (1970) and Dulay (1982) who divide the causes of errors into interlanguage error (error caused by mother tongue) and intralanguage error (error caused by the learning process).