CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Nowadays, writing plays a pivotal role in human's everyday language. It is proven by the benefits of writing impact people. Based on Rizal (2021) even when they do not meet in person, learners can still communicate with one another through writing. Then, learners who struggle with speaking can also benefit from writing. Lastly, it is one of reinforcement, improving language and learning style development for learners. With those benefits, people can communicate effectively, and all the messages can be delivered appropriately. Hence, people need to pay attention to their writing skills. Handayani & Aminatun (2020) stated that with writing people can provoke their ideas and expressions. Other than that, the fundamentals of good writing are not only about provoking thoughts but also captivating the reader with compelling narratives or strong messages.

Writing as an English skill is particularly useful in international organization platforms like AIESEC (*Association Internationale des Etudiants en Sciences Economiques et Commerciales*). Basically, AIESEC is a student organization aims to help young people discover and develop their leadership potential (AIESEC, n.d.). English writing is frequently used in this organization because almost every activity in AIESEC implements English as its main language. Johan et al. (2023) stated AIESEC helps students become more comfortable using English in daily activities and meetings. At AIESEC in UNJ

(local chapter of AIESEC in Indonesia), English writings are already being introduced since the members were being applicants. For example, in the scope of English writing, AIESEC in UNJ required applicants to create a CV and portfolio to provide applicants with information regarding their experience. In Addition, AIESEC in UNJ required the applicants to create an essay which told about the self-introduction, 5-years plan and preferred division of the applicants. Those narrated essays helped recruiters to know further regarding the applicants' backgrounds. Several aspects were also being assessed from their essays such as content and grammar.

Basically, from the required essay contents above, the essay can be categorized as a narrative essay. According to Medvid & Podolkova (2019) there are several types of essays, they are essays of cause and effect, classification and division, compare and contrast, exemplification, history thesis, dialectical essay, critical, narrative, descriptive, etc. Narrative essay is one of the common ones for EFL learners. Vista & Sukma (2023) defined a narrative as a method for narrating a story or event in a logical and systematic order. Heryanti & Sucipto (2017) argued a narrative essay provides an explanation of a story or set of events based on the writer's personal experience and knowledge. They added, this essay is more like a story that is being told.

In order to make a good impression through the essay, writers need to take a deeper focus on writing the structure. Additionally, creating a well-structured essay will contain proper grammar. Fitria (2023) stated that grammar can be defined as a set of guidelines for utilizing language that covers everything from word and phrase placement to sentence structure. Kumayas & Lengkoan (2023)

stated since grammar is a basic component of a language, learning it has been a part of language skills. So, it can be seen that grammar is one of the essential parts of writing, especially writing an essay. However, as EFL learners, Indonesia's students are often facing grammatical errors in writing an essay. Despite the fact that this essay is essentially a narrative, the students still need to support their own essays with the good grammar.

Heryanti & Sucipto (2017) in their research have revealed that there were 599 grammatical errors which occurred in 102 narrative essays created by the third-semester students at Jambi University. Another phenomenon happened in college students at Purworejo Muhammadiyah University, Indonesia, which showed that there are 138 grammars error in 20 essay writings (Setiyorini et al., 2020). Additionally, grammatical error was also happening in the senior high school level. It happened in the SMA IT Tunas Bangsa Insan Mandiri Cilodong, Depok. The researcher revealed that there are more than 300 grammatical errors by 24 students' narrative writings (Triyuono, 2022). These conditions present us how grammatical errors are still concerning in English writing, especially narrative essay.

These conditions can be caused by several factors which still happening in EFL learners. The first factor, grammar is not easy to learn for EFL learners. For EFL learners learning and mastering grammar competencies is a hard thing to do, because there are few of rules in its usage which need to be followed Daskan, A (2023). Moreover, it does not happen in EFL learners it happens either in non-EFL learners. Fitria (2023) in her research presented that 75 out of 110 non-EFL learners agreed that grammar is a complicated and complex

component in language learning. Another crucial factor is first language interference, as EFL learners usually get confused about grammatical differences between the first language and the second one. Septiana (2020) in her research revealed that the 22 students who were formally enrolled in the Academic Writing course for the 2017–2018 school year have demonstrated that they are still experiencing difficulties with Indonesian grammar, which is their mother tongue. The same phenomenon has also happened in IKIP PGRI Pontianak, it is reported that 25 preservice teachers still make the grammatical errors due to the first language interference and lack of knowledge (Linarsih et al., 2020). Lastly, the lack of knowledge of grammar, Linarsih et al. (2020) in their research showed us, that students with English language backgrounds are still lacking grammar knowledge. It presented that students still get confused of subject-verb agreement. Another example happened in Artha Wacana Christian University, Kupang. It revealed that students are still often making errors regarding grammar in academic writing (Tlonaen, 2020).

During rapid AI advancement, EFL learners might ask for assistance for writing. However, several studies have shown that AI-powered grammar checkers are still failed in detecting grammatical errors. Park (2019) found that the tool like Grammarly often fail to detect omissions of conjunctions, structure, and various verb-related issues such as tense, agreement, and auxiliary verbs. Other research from Alsaweed & Aljebreen (2024) revealed that ChatGPT struggles with errors involving connectors, idiomatic expressions, and sentence structure. Similarly, Ho (2022) found that QuillBot frequently failed to detect common ESL errors, including incorrect verb tenses, subject-verb agreement,

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and singular-plural mismatches. Given these limitations, both Park and Ho emphasized that human raters remain more accurate than AI systems, and manual review is still essential when using AI-generated feedback.

Hence, the author conducted a study **"An Analysis of Grammatical Errors in Narrative Essays for Join AIESEC 2022 Applicants at UNJ."** Most previous studies have conducted research regarding the analysis of grammatical errors in academic essays in within formal educational settings such as in Junior and Senior high school, or even University level. Moreover, most of the studies tend to discuss about only one analytical approach, such as Dulay's surface strategy taxonomy of error types only. This study combines the error types by Dulay and causes of error concept by Brown to get more comprehensive analysis of the grammatical errors, which has rarely been explored in previous research. Importantly, participants from 2022 were chosen to ensure the authenticity of the essays, as this year preceded the widespread use of AI prompt as writing tools.

1.2 Research Questions

1) With reference to Dulay's Surface Strategy Taxonomy (SST) (1982), What types of grammatical error are found in the Join AIESEC 2022 applicants at UNJ's narrative essays?

2) With reference to Brown (2000), what causes contribute to the occurrence of those grammatical errors found in the narrative essays of Join AIESEC 2022 applicants at UNJ?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

This study aims to classify the types of grammatical errors found in narrative essays submitted for the "Join AIESEC 2022" application at AIESEC in UNJ. Additionally, it seeks to identify the causes that lead English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners from various majors at UNJ to make these errors. By understanding both the types of these errors and their underlying causes, the study hopes to provide insights for improving EFL learning and writing proficiency among UNJ students.

1.4 Scope of the Study

The study was conducted to investigate the grammatical errors in English writing and the sources contributing to these errors in narrative essays submitted by 10 applicants of Join AIESEC 2022 applicants at Universitas Negeri Jakarta. The study used the Surface Strategy Taxonomy by Dulay to classify the grammatical errors and identify the sources of errors by the Brown concept which consists of interlingual transfer, intralingual transfer, context of learning, and communication strategies. Additionally, the author used document analysis and semi-structured interview methods to collect the data from 10 applicants of Join AIESEC 2022 at UNJ. Further research in different contexts and years would be necessary to establish broader trends in grammatical errors and their contributing sources in student writing.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Theoretically, this study contributes to the growing body of research on second language acquisition, particularly around grammatical error analysis. By combining Dulay's Surface Strategy Taxonomy with Brown's classification of

error source, it provides a more holistic framework for understanding not only what error occur, but also why error happen. This dual-framework approach enriches the theoretical discussion around error and learner interlanguage development, offering integrated model for future research.

Practically, this research has several implications for English Language teaching and learning. First, it can assist English lecturers at UNJ and other institutions identify the most common grammatical difficulties faced by students, particularly in real-world writing contexts such as application essays. By highlighting the frequency and types of errors, teacher can highlight, and design more focused grammar instruction and error based on the actual learning gaps. Additionally, the result can inform the development of contextualized grammar instruction, moving beyond rule memorization toward real-life language use. For example, lecturers can integrate authentic writing task such as self-introduction and personal statement while providing explicit self-grammar correction and reflection. Workshops or training sessions can also be conducted to raise students' awareness about grammatical accuracy in writing for academic and professional purposes.

In the scope of UNJ, this finding is also beneficial for ELESP lecturers or even prospective teachers to know the grammatical condition of EFL learners in UNJ towards their writing specifically in narrative essays, since some research participants came from English department background. In Addition, at AIESEC recruitment itself, this study might influence the applicants by raising their awareness towards the errors of essay writings or other writing activities. This action might help future applicants to prepare better essays.

1.6 Novelty of the Study

Various previous studies have analyzed grammatical errors in academic essays primarily within formal educational settings such as junior high shools, senior high schools, and universities. These studies often rely on a single analytical approach, with Dulays's Surface Strategy Taxonomy being one of the most frequently used to classify error types. In response to these limitations, the present study introduces novel perspective by examining grammatical errors in a non-classroom context, narrative essays written by applicants for the Join AIESEC 2022 program at Universitas Negeri Jakarta. To provide a more in-depth analysis, this study adopts a dual approach by combining Dulay's approach for analyzing error types with Brown's approach for identifying the sources of the errors. This combination enables a more comprehensive understanding of both the nature and causes of grammatical errors.