

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Almost all of our activities in our daily life need communication in order to share our ideas and feelings to other people. The way to communicate our ideas is by using languages. According to Cook (1989, p.26), language can be separated by some functions; emotive function, directive function, phatic function, poetic function, referential function/carrying information, metalinguistic function and contextual function. Cook explains the emotive function as the inner states and emotions of the addresser. The words like ‘Fantastic’, ‘Ugh!’, ‘Oh no!’ represent what feeling the addresser has. The second is the directive function which is sought to affect the behavior of the addressee. Directive means to direct someone or addressee to do something. ‘Please help me’, ‘Shut up!’, ‘I’m warning you!’ are some examples of directive functions which we use in our daily live. The third is the phatic function which is used for opening such a conversation and for practical ones. ‘Hello’, ‘Lovely weather, isn’t it?’, ‘Do you come here often?’ are some expressions we sometimes use to open a conversation with new people. ‘Are you still there?’, ‘Can you see the blackboard from the back of the room?’, ‘Can you read my writing?’ are the examples for the practical ones where people try to make communication to others through the environment around them all. The forth is the poetic functions which the particular form chosen is the essence of the message, such as BEANZ MEANZ HEINZ which is an interesting advertising slogan means if you buy beans, you will naturally buy Heinz. The fifth function is

the referential function which means carrying information. We can call it as the informative function. It informs you what something works on. The sixth is the metalinguistic function which is focusing attention to clarify something. The expressions you meet such as, 'What does this word here mean?', 'This bone is known as the "femur"', "'Will' and "shall" mean the same thing nowadays' represent how we need clarification and how we focus on something. The last is contextual function which means creating a particular kind of communication, such as 'Right, let's play a game', 'it's just a small problem.' Those functions are really used by people to have communication with each other.

Truthfully, learning a language for adults is quite complex. There are many things we should consider, such as vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar. In English, we also learn the language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. English is definitely used by a lot of people around the world. People who learn English must also be able to master those four skills and the components, although the degree of their capability is not the same.

The skills and the components of the English language we have will be proved in our language production. This product will be seen when we want to share our ideas or even understand people's ideas. The language production of people will be different from each other. In order to have good language production people must learn some important bases of languages, such as the English components and English skills. If people are able to comprehend the skills and the components well, it's sure that people will have good language production; both in writing and speaking.

English Education Study Program of Widya Mandala Catholic University

Surabaya, one of the English Education Study Programs in Surabaya, is obliged to create good English teachers. The students are facing many steps and challenges to comprehend the English language. The language skills are taught in many phases, such as Listening I and Listening II, Speaking I – IV, Reading I – IV, and Writing I – IV. In this research, the researcher is interested to find out the use of English Past Tenses of Recount Text which is in the first step of learning Writing.

Writing, which is one of the language productions, is connected with speaking in several different ways, but writing is often considered much more “difficult” perhaps because of attitudes towards the value of written texts and notions associated with “correctness” and the gravity of errors (Spelkova and Hurstl, 2008). Giving our idea in good organization needs some exercises and experiences. Richards and Renandya (2003, p. 303) stated that there is no doubt that writing is the most difficult skill for second language learners to master. In making good writing, grammar also holds an important part. It’s true when people explain something in the appropriate grammar, other people will easily understand what they explain.

In Writing I, the students are taught by some kinds of text such as Recount Text, Narrative, and Biography-Autobiography. Recount Text itself is given in the first chapter. Interested in finding how well the students write Recount text using the appropriate English Past Tenses. The students who are studying Writing I, also get Structure II which contains grammar to be mastered.

Recount Text which is checked by the researcher is a text which is used to retell or recount an event or an experience. It is usually telling the direct experience of the researcher. The prefix ‘re’ means ‘again’, therefore ‘to recount’ is ‘to state

again'. Because of telling the past event, we were supposed to write the story in Past Tenses. According to Knapp and Watkins (2005, p. 223), Recount Texts are sequential texts that do little more than sequence a series of events. Every story, no matter how simple, needs an orientation. In the orientation, we see that there are characters set up in a particular time and place.

In this research, the researcher focuses only on recount text which is done by the English Education Study Program Students of Widya Mandala Catholic University in the academic year 2014/2015. The reason why the researcher chooses this topic is the researcher wants to find out how well the students their knowledge of English Past Tenses and apply it into Recount Text. To help his study, the researcher decides to take other data from the Mid-Term test of Writing I which has a correlation with the English Past Tenses. The material of Mid-Term test was Recount Text where the language use in this text is Past Simple Tense, Past Continuous Tense, Past Perfect Simple Tense and Past Perfect Continuous Tense. Interested in finding out how far the students' language production of English in writing, the research is aimed to know how well the students have mastered the English Past Tenses and applied the knowledge of the English Past Tenses in writing Recount Text in their Mid-Term Test.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Based on the study background, the question for this study is:

To what extent has the knowledge of The English Past Tenses been applied to the writing of recount texts?

1.3. Objective of the Study

Based on the statement above, the main objective of this study is:

To find out how well the knowledge of The English Past Tenses has been applied well in writing recount texts by Writing I students of 2014.

1.4. Significant of the Study

1. To find out how well the students master the English language, especially Past Tenses in long term memory of the students.
2. The result of the study is expected to be input in teaching learning process especially for teaching writing subject.
3. Knowing the grammatical errors in the very beginning, it is useful to reduce the errors made by students in the next semester.

1.5. Assumption

This study is based on the following assumptions: the knowledge of the English Past Tenses from Structure I will be applied to write down the Recount Text compositions.

1.6. Limitation and Scope

In this study, the variables are limited to Past Simple Tense, Past Continuous Tense, Past Perfect Simple Tense and Past Perfect Continuous Tense which contain a verb form or series of verb forms used to express at time relation including Modal (will-would and can-could) in the Recount Text made by the English Education Study Program Students of Widya Mandala Catholic University

of the academic year 2014/2015 in Mid-term Test 2014/2015. Therefore, prepositions, articles, gerund, pronouns, to infinitive, etc were not included in the analysis. The researcher analyzed the predicates based on the form and function.

1.7. Definition of Key Terms

1. English Past Tenses which are discussed in this study are Past Simple Tense, Past Continuous Tense, Past Perfect Simple Tense and Past Perfect Continuous Tense.
2. Writing is the most popular and prevalent method of creating connections among people. As a means of building links between individuals and within communities, writing serves as the flexible foundation for almost every type of communications media. (Kerstetter, Bob)
3. A Recount Text is a piece of text that retells past events, usually in other order in which they happened. The recount is used to relate experiences or retell events for the purpose of informing, entertaining or reflecting. Anderson, M. & Anderson, K. (1997, p. 48)

1.8. Organization of the Study

This thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter introduces the topic of the research such as the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the objective of the study, the significance of the study, the scope and limitation, the definition of key-terms, and the organization of the study.

The second chapter presents the review of the related theories which is

divided into related literature and review of related studies.

The third chapter presents the research methodology.

The fourth chapter presents the analysis and discussions.

The fifth chapter presents the conclusion and suggestions, then Bibliography and Appendix.