# CHAPTER 2

# REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

## 2.1 Learning Writing Skills

According to Sword (2012), writing skills encompass the ability of authors to effectively engage readers by presenting information in a compelling and attention-grabbing manner. The quality of writing is determined by how authors employ language and successfully incorporate various linguistic elements into their text. Many of these elements fall under the categories of structural and lexical skills. Lexical skills pertain to the selection of appropriate words by writers (Gustillo & Magno, 2012), while structural skills involve the construction of language (Ahmed, 2010). Together, these skills contribute to the text's accuracy in terms of grammar, punctuation, and spelling. These fundamental aspects also play a crucial role in determining the organization and structure of a well-crafted text (Bailey, 2015).

Learning to write in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) poses specific challenges for second language learners, as it requires developing intellectual proficiency. These challenges arise from the disparity between the linguistic characteristics of English and the learners' first language. Mastering writing skills is considered essential for students' overall language development, enabling them to find their voice and enhance their English competencies across various literacy-driven progressions (Angélica, 2021).

Writing presents distinct difficulties compared to speaking, as errors and misunderstandings are less forgivable in written language. Unlike spontaneous speech, writing is a conscious process that allows learners ample time to convey their knowledge on paper or screen (Sajid, 2016; Amiri and Puteh, 2017). Cultural differences further complicate writing in English for foreign students. Research indicates that students encounter challenges in writing due to vocabulary deficiencies, poor spelling, interference from their first language (L1), and

inadequate understanding of grammatical structures. Inefficient teaching methods employed by teachers also contribute to these difficulties (Farooq, M. S., 2020). The complexities and idiosyncrasies of English, especially for second language learners, further exacerbate these obstacles. Consequently, errors and mistakes in written language tend to be less accepted and tolerated compared to spoken language (Özkayran, Ali, & Yilmaz, 2020).

## 2.2 Learning Essay Writing

Essay writing serves multiple purposes, such as expressing ideas, analyzing information, persuading readers, and demonstrating knowledge. This enables students to approach topics critically, present coherent arguments, and exhibit a comprehensive understanding of the subject (McMillan, 2016). An essay typically consists of three paragraphs, including an introduction, main body, and conclusion, with each section contributing to the development of the central idea known as the thesis statement (Zemack & Rumisek, 2005; Bailey, 2003). The quality of an essay is determined by its cohesion, coherence, lexicon, and mechanics. Cohesion and coherence are essential for creating a clear and understandable essay. Coherence ensures logical organization and clarity in the flow of ideas, while cohesion establishes connections between words, paragraphs, and the overall essay (Hinkle, 2004). Lexicon refers to the careful selection and appropriate use of words, while mechanics involve the proper use of language constructs (Ahmed, 2010; Gustillo & Magno, 2012).

A well-structured essay consists of an introduction, a main paragraph, and a conclusion. The introduction provides context, establishes the thesis, and explains the essay's main points. The main paragraph presents the evidence and arguments that support the paper, while the conclusion summarizes the main points and provides a final point of view (Hacker & Sommers, 2017). In other words, it is necessary to express the thoughts in definite terms in a formal text. Randolph Quirk, professor of English language and literature at University College London, wrote that general rule and the use of written text as a means of communication imply the absence of the person or persons to whom the text is

addressed. It is required to provide much more clarity about this issue: sentences must be phrased properly and accurately (Dildora,2022).

In the field of language teaching, there has been significant attention given to the challenges students encounter when writing essays. Trang and Hoa (2008) conducted a study that identified three primary problems faced by students in essay writing. Firstly, students found it challenging to allocate sufficient time for planning their writing. In certain cases, they spent extensive periods contemplating what to write, particularly when dealing with unfamiliar topics. Teachers also highlighted those students struggled with generating relevant and coherent ideas for their essays (Hafrison, 2020). Furthermore, emotional difficulties arose from both student and teacher attitudes towards the teaching and learning of essay writing. Many students expressed intrinsic demotivation to engage in writing classes, often stemming from a perceived lack of interest and confidence in their writing abilities. Consequently, they lacked experience in academic writing and encountered difficulties in producing high-quality essays. Thus, students need to engage in comprehensive and effective writing practice to develop their proficiency in crafting well-structured essays. Consequently, cognitive challenges are considered the primary obstacles in this regard (Bulqiyah, 2021).

## 2.3 Public Speaking Script

Public speaking involves the formal process of effectively communicating ideas and influencing others. The significance of developing public speaking skills remains unchanged (Lucas, 2009). In today's job market, college graduates are expected to deliver impressive presentations during job interviews (Lucas, 2009; Larkin, 2019). One type of public speaking is the informative speech, which aims to share information with an audience. These speeches can take various forms, such as explanatory, descriptive, or demonstrative, depending on the subject matter, object, person, place, concept, process, or function being discussed. Informative speeches rely heavily on well-researched data to comprehensively explore the chosen topic and align it with the audience's interests (Beebe, 2012). However, to make a speech impactful, it should be carefully

crafted with a clear and coherent structure, drawing upon diverse and credible sources of information (Liza, 2019).

As the preparation before the students demonstrate their ideas, public speaking activity in MTs Boarding School of Daarul Ukhuwwah starts with preparation in writing a speech paper, correcting, and justifying the paper. All students were required to write about 250 words of public speaking scripts in about a week. This custom is in line with Liza (2019) who points out that the influential speech is constructed by the structured arrangement. She believes that the process of writing a script affects the way students perform in front of the public. The idea that improving one's capability in public speaking by using a writing medium is logical. To demonstrate, take into consideration crucial rules of viable composing. High-quality composing is recognized by having a coherent opening, a straightforward layout of the fabric, a well-elaborated primary section, and a concluding area that typifies the substance (Boyd, 1995). These exceptional properties that characterize effective writing are so also appropriate for depicting impactful verbal introductions. To supply an occurrence, Ferguson (2008) suggests that impactful verbal introductions envelop an initial fragment, substance, main body, and a summarizing conclusion. These two assumptions show that the quality of public speaking writing context is related to students' speaking performances.

## 2.4 Error Analysis

Error analysis is a linguistic approach that examines the errors made by language learners to understand the root causes of these errors. This literature review explores the fundamental concepts, methodologies, and practical applications of error analysis in second language learning (Heydari & Bagheri, 2012). Error analysis operates on the premise that mistakes made by language learners offer valuable insights into the process of language acquisition. It involves a systematic analysis of errors to identify patterns and pinpoint areas of difficulty for learners (Corder, 1967). Corder (1981) further provides two justifications for conducting error analysis: a theoretical rationale and a practical rationale. The theoretical rationale suggests that error analysis contributes to the

investigation of the language learning process, while the practical rationale indicates that it aids teachers in recognizing and addressing errors to facilitate learner improvement. Although some consider error analysis to be outdated, given its origins in the 1960s and subsequent criticism in favor of interlanguage theory (Selinker, 1992), it undeniably remains valuable in the context of English language learning and teaching. Notably, it has proven to be effective in diagnosing writing difficulties among English learners, analyzing the underlying causes of these challenges, and providing effective solutions.

## 2.5 Grammatical Errors

In her comprehensive examination of second language acquisition, Ellis (1994) discussed grammatical errors and categorized them into three main types: developmental errors, interference errors, and intralingual errors. Developmental errors arise naturally during the language acquisition process, while interference errors result from the influence of the learner's native language. Intralingual errors, or "fossilized errors," are systematic errors that persist even at advanced levels of language proficiency. James (1998) further explored grammatical errors in language learning and identified specific types, such as errors related to verb tense, word order, subject-verb agreement, articles, prepositions, and pronouns. Understanding the underlying linguistic rules and structures behind these errors was emphasized by James. Moreover, specific grammatical error patterns have been identified in different linguistic contexts. For instance, Han (2004) investigated grammatical errors in Chinese learners' English writing and found common errors related to verb tenses, articles, word order, and sentence structure. Grammatical errors have been extensively studied in the realm of second language acquisition and language learning. Scholars have examined various aspects of these errors, including their occurrence, types, causes, and implications for language development. Understanding different types of grammatical errors can provide insights into learners' language proficiency and inform instructional strategies (Ellis, 2008).

Grammatical errors can manifest in various forms, including subject-verb agreement, verb tense, word order, article, pronoun, and preposition errors.

Subject-verb agreement errors occur when there is a disagreement in number between the subject and verb in a sentence. Verb tense errors involve the misuse or inconsistent usage of verb tenses. Word order errors refer to the incorrect positioning of words or phrases within a sentence. Article errors involve incorrect or omitted usage of articles such as *"a"* ,*"an*," or *"the"*. Pronoun errors occur when pronouns are used incorrectly, leading to ambiguity or confusion in reference. Preposition errors involve the incorrect use or omission of prepositions. Recognizing and addressing these common types of grammatical errors can greatly enhance the clarity and accuracy of written and spoken English (Celce-Murcia, Larsen-Freeman, Marta, 1999).

## 2.6 Types of Grammatical Errors in the Use of *Articles*

Article Error is an incorrect usage of *articles*, such as *"a", "an"* or *"the"* in English sentences (Murphy, 2019). Mohanna (2014) researched an analysis of essays written by English Foreign Language (EFL) students from Saudi universities. The goal was to identify and categorize different types of article errors in their writing. The researcher used comparative analysis and error analysis methods to identify, classify, analyze, and provide explanations for students' mistakes. The result of the study revealed the existence of different types of errors. These encompassed the omission of *'a'* and *'an'*.

According to Morgan (2016), there are several errors in using articles as follows:

### 2.6.1 Omission Errors

In a grammatical context, omission errors refer to errors made when a writer or speaker fails to include necessary articles (such as *"a"*, *"an"*, or *"the"*) in a sentence where they are required for the reason of clarity or grammatical accuracy. Brown (1999) suggests that the main mistake learners often make is omitting articles when working with singular count nouns. This idea is supported by Thomas's (1989) research on the overuse of the zero article, which means no article at all.

Here is an example of omission errors in the article:

Incorrect:(1) *South Africa is country*

Correct: (2) *South Africa is a country*

Clarification: In sentence number (1), " *South Africa is country,"* the article *"a"* is absent (omitted) which leads to the unclear meaning of the noun "*South Africa*". That is whether it is singular or plural. By adding the indefinite article *"a"* before the "country," the sentence gets to be syntactically correct and conveys the intended meaning. So, the correct sentence is, *"South Africa is a country".*

**2.6.2 Redundant articles**

Redundancy refers to anything other than the minimum necessary for expression or conveying information that is considered not necessary. Redundant articles refer to the unnecessary or additional use of articles (*a, an, the*) in a sentence, resulting in the incorrect use of grammar rules. Such errors can affect the flow and clarity of written and spoken language. Redundant articles often occur when speakers or authors frequently use articles before nouns, especially when the article is not required according to the rules of grammar. Omar (2019) mentioned in his study that 15 out of 25 students used the article "the" unnecessarily or excessively in the English translations of Arabic sentences, resulting in grammatically incorrect English translations.

Here is an example of omission errors in the article:

Incorrect: (1) *"If you have the courage to face the all kinds of the difficulties, studying abroad is a good opportunity for you."*

Correct: (2) *"If you have the courage to face all kinds of the difficulties, studying abroad is a good opportunity for you."*

Clarification: The purpose of the definite article in English is to identify the noun that follows it as the specific thing the speaker is referring to. In sentence number (1), the article *"the"* is redundant because *"all"* is not intended to identify *"kinds"* specifically. The modifier *"all kinds"* gives a sense of diversity or variety, which contradicts the intention of the definite article. However, when the noun is accompanied by the modifier *"all kinds"*, the definite article *"the"* should be omitted in this sentence (Yang, 2021). So, the best correction is presented in sentence number (2), *"If you have the courage to face all kinds of the difficulties, studying abroad is a good opportunity for you."*

### 2.6.3 Incorrect *articles*

Incorrect use of an *article* is the wrong selection or misplacement of an *article* (***a, an, the***) in a sentence, leading to grammatical errors. This error can affect the clarity and accuracy of the message being transmitted. Haytham (2023) pointed out that among the types of errors that students make, this error occurs with the lowest frequency. However, the data indicate cases where the indefinite article *"a"* was mistakenly replaced by *"an."* Also, students replaced the indefinite article *"a"* with the definite article *"the"*.

Here is an example of omission errors in the article:

Incorrect: *"I waited for a hour."*

Correct: *"I waited for an hour."*

Clarification: This example demonstrates that the indefinite article *"an"* has been substituted for the indefinite article *"a"*. This may happen because some students think that the word *"hour"* is preceded by a consonant sound, "h" so that they use the article *"a"*. Whereas the correct pronunciation is [*au*]. In other words, the consonant *"h"* is not pronounced. Thus, the correct article is "an".

### 2.7 Causes of Grammatical Errors in the Use of *Articles*

Learning a new language presents both challenges common to all learners and unique issues related to each language and culture. Negative language transfer is not necessarily a problem if the learner's native language has similar grammatical rules as English (Oviogun & Veerdee, 2020; Widana et al., 2020). However, English grammar rules are different from those of most languages, so it's often difficult.

According to Li (2021), there are four causes of errors in the use of articles, namely interlanguage, lack of explanation, lack of awareness, and overgeneralization. They are explained as follows.

### 2.7.1 Interlanguage

Grammar errors can occur when learners transfer structures from their mother tongue or previous language learning experience to the target language (Selinker, 1972). This case frequently happens to most Asian learners of English

who often struggle with the use of articles (*"a," "an,"* and *"the"*) because most Asians do not have specific articles. As a result, they might produce sentences like "I saw a movie yesterday" when it should be "I saw the movie yesterday." It is also revealed that English teachers of Japanese descent have strongly accepted the challenge of achieving correct pronunciation for effective communication (Uchida & Sugimoto, 2020). A study by Lévis (2020) further supports the idea that achieving native-like pronunciation is difficult.  However, it is advisable to find a pronunciation that is close to the native language. Karim and Nassaji (2013) who examined how native language influences writing in a second language (L2) revealed that when individuals write in a second language, their native language impacts their writing. Fatemi, Sobhani, and Abolhassan (2012) explored the differences in pronunciation of consonant clusters between an individual's primary and secondary languages. They observed that when the structures of the first and second languages were different, learners had difficulty pronouncing L2 because of unfamiliar phonemic rules.  In contrast, Lord (2008) who conducted a reverse survey, focusing on how second language acquisition affects an individual's mother tongue (L1) points out that learners of bilingual communities may have impaired or lost proficiency in their native language.

**2.7.2 Lack of Explicit Instructions**

Poor or ineffective grammar instruction can lead to grammatical errors. If learners are not provided with clear explanations and examples of grammatical structures, they may find it challenging or troublesome to use them correctly (Larsen, 2001). This may happen when teachers typically teach students how to construct sentences in their native language by presenting grammatical rules in a deductive manner, devoid of context. The primary goal is to impart knowledge of the grammar rules. Consequently, students often struggle to apply these rules when writing (Alghazo & Khaliefah, 2020). This issue raises the question of how we can expect students to write effectively in English if they encounter difficulties in doing so in their native language. English is usually taught and explained using the native language as the medium of instruction, which can compound the students' challenges (Al Noursi, 2018; Marek, 2016; Khan, 2011). While

textbooks within the curriculum do encompass various language skills, the root of the problem often lies with the teaching methods and the classroom environment. Even when students learn English in a classroom setting where their native language is primarily used, they may still lack the conducive environment necessary for practical application and practice (Kresh, 2009).

### 2.7.3 Lack of awareness

Some learners may not be aware of certain grammatical rules and features, especially articles, which can lead to errors in language production (Ellis, 2006). Language learners may not know certain grammatical rules, vocabulary nuances, or cultural backgrounds that are important for effective communication. For example, learners may not be aware of the difference between formal and informal language records in a foreign language, which may lead to inappropriate communication in certain situations (Selinker, 2008). This can result in language-related biases, stereotyping, or insensitivity to the linguistic needs and identities of others (Heller, 2010). One of the core concepts of educational *articles* revolves around the concept of countability, as discussed by Butler (2002).

In English, nouns are classified as "countable" or "uncountable". Countable nouns can be plural, such as "table" or "children", while uncountable nouns, such as "mud" or "information", cannot be plural. Students need to understand that countability is a grammatical distinction, not a practical one. For example, "money" is countable when referring to individual bills or coins in a wallet, but is not usually plural as a noun, although the form "money" is sometimes used in commercial contexts. The diverse nature of these noun forms can pose challenges for learners, especially with the increasing use of traditionally uncountable nouns, such as "knowledge" or "behavior." ", in the plural in various academic fields. Further complexity comes from certain English nouns, such as "experience", which can be countable or uncountable depending on their meaning.

### 2.7.4 Overgeneralization

Learners possibly overgeneralize rules and patterns; and then misapply them in different contexts which causes article errors (Spada, N., & Lightbown, P. M., 2006). Overgeneralization occurs when a student applies a rule in a way that

goes beyond its intended scope, encompassing situations where the rule is not meant to be applied. This occurrence can manifest in many different aspects, including semantics, syntax, morphology, or behavior. It is a systematic process in which children build and use language unconsciously, representing a significant break from simple imitation. This highlights their creativity (Wazar et al.,2011). As Marcus (1992) has pointed out there is no doubt about the phenomenon of overgeneralization itself or the innovative nature of the underlying psychological processes that cause it. Numerous forms of overgeneralization may indicate that learners are actively developing their cognitive understanding of grammar (Zheng & Park, 2013). Xia suggests (2012) that students' English writing errors, especially those involving infinitives, may be related to the broad and generalized application of target language rules. Furthermore, Sun (2013) investigated the case of ungrammatical structures in the free writing of her Chinese EFL learners. The analysis revealed that the most common grammatical error in Chinese students' writings was incorrect use of determiners, which was mainly due to inappropriate influence from their mother tongue (L1). This influence leads to unnecessary *article* functions. An example of this case is, *"I went home. Because we were tired, the all students were slept*," the error of this sentence is categorized as a simple addition mistake. It occurs when the student includes an item that should not be in a grammatically correct statement. Specifically, the error arises when the student uses the article *"the"* before the noun *"students,"* which is preceded by the indefinite numeral adjective *"all."* It appears that the student is incorrectly generalizing the use of the article "the" with nouns. In this context, the article *"the"* is unnecessary, as *"students"* is already preceded by the indefinite numeral adjective "all." Consequently, the correct expression should be *"all students,"* and *" all students"* should be amended to *"all students."* (Yusuf, 2012).