CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents some topics related to background of study, statement of problems, purpose of study, scope and limitation, significance of study and definition of key terms.

1.1 Background of Study

As an international language, English plays an important role as a means of communication among people in the world. Realizing the importance of English as spoken and written international communication, Indonesian Ministry of Education includes English as a compulsory subject to learn in Junior High School and Senior High School. Thus, Indonesian students need to learn English.

In learning language, there are certain skills which students need to learn, namely speaking, writing, listening, and reading. Speaking and writing involve language production as productive skills. Reading and listening involve receiving messages as receptive skills. However, writing is an essential part of learning a language which plays important role for the students in the process of learning language which is taught along listening, speaking, and reading.

Writing is considered to be the most complicated skill because the students should be able to combine their opinions in good written forms. White and Arndt (1997: 3) said that writing is far from being a simple matter of transcribing language into written symbols, it is a thinking process. It requires the students to pay attention not only in generating and developing ideas into a good writing but also the language components; structure, vocabulary, and spelling.
The students are expected to be able to write English well in terms of grammatical aspect. Structure or grammar is one of the basic components of language. Harmer (2001: 12) defines grammar as the description of the ways in which words can change their forms and can be combined into sentences in that language. In learning a language, it is important to understand the grammar rules in forming correct sentence.

Curriculum in Indonesia requires the students to be able to write texts such as descriptive text, narrative text, and recount text. Based on the curriculum 2013, recount text is taught in the eighth year or eighth grade of junior high school. The basic competence of the lesson is that students should be able to write recount text either verbal or written about activity, event by concerning on social function, text structure, and grammar contextually.

Recount text is a report of events or activity in the past. According to Hartono (2005), recount text is a text which tells events for the purpose of informing or entertaining. Recount text has three structures; orientation, sequence of event, and re-orientation. The orientation is the background information answering who, when, where and why. Sequence of event tells events which happened in the past based on the time and place when it occurred in the chronological order. Reorientation expresses a personal opinion regarding the events described.

Based on the previous study, Ansyar (2012) found that the students had most dominant problem particularly in dealing with the changes of the verb form from infinitive into past tense in the simple past tense.
There are nine types of errors classified by the researcher based on his own category, namely, omission of *to be*, wrong form of *to be*, wrong form of *infinitive to*, addition of *to be* (before/after), wrong form of verb, wrong form of modal auxiliary, omission of verb, wrong form of negative sentence, and omission of subject pronoun.

Meanwhile, Rina (2009), who conducted An Analysis in Using of Simple Past Tense in the Students Short Composition, found that students still made errors in using the simple past tense. The percentage of errors is 34%. It means that more than ten students make errors. The total numbers of answer are 30 word details, 20 correct answers and 10 wrong answers. The percentage of correct answer is 67% and the wrong answer is 34%.

Furthermore, tense has a fundamental role in writing the text. In writing recount text, students are required to use simple past tense correctly. However, the students frequently have problems in writing, especially in the text organization and the use of simple past tense. A number of students have problems in learning target language because it is totally different with the first language (Cook, 2003; 162). The structural differences between Indonesian and English could cause students to make some grammatical errors.

Moreover, the students frequently make errors in using simple past tense in writing recount text. The students need to use simple past tense to write recount text.
However, they frequently have difficulties in using verb correctly, especially in regular verb and irregular verb. According to Fadzylina (2007:2), simple past tense and perspective aspects of the verb are two difficult areas for ESL. The errors sometimes occur when they are required to use correct grammar and tenses.

In this case, the students’ errors could be an important feedback for both students and the teacher. Error analysis can be used to determine what learners still need to be taught. It provides the necessary information about what is lacking in their competence in order to determine the effectiveness of certain method in teaching it.

In this research, the researcher deals with **Errors in Using Simple Past Tense in Writing Recount Text** because recount text is considered as types of text which is complicated. This research is conducted in eighth grade students of SMPN 11 Malang. Analyzing students’ errors in using simple past in writing recount text is expected to improve teacher’s teaching skill and overcome the students’ errors, especially in writing.

### 1.2 Statement of Problems

Based on the description of background study, the researcher formulates some problems of this study as follows:

1. What are errors in using simple past tense in writing recount text made by the eighth grade students of SMPN 11 Malang?

2. How is the frequency of errors in using simple past tense in writing recount text made by the eighth grade students of SMPN 11 Malang?
1.3 **Purpose of Study**

Based on the statement of problems, the purposes of study are stated as follows:

1. To know the errors in using simple past tense in writing recount text made by the eighth grade students of SMPN 11 Malang
2. To find out the frequency of errors in using simple past tense in writing recount text made by the eighth grade students of SMPN 11 Malang

1.4 **Scope and Limitation**

In this research, the researcher focuses on the errors of using simple past tense in writing recount text. Moreover, this research is limited to the use of verb in simple past tense analyzed using Surface Strategy Taxonomy.

1.5 **Significance of Study**

The researcher expects that this research can be used as the references in order to improve students’ understanding of writing and errors in writing text, especially a recount text. This research is also intended to improve the teaching learning process for the teachers by analyzing students’ errors in writing, especially in recount text.
1.6 Definition of Key Term

To avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation, the following terms are defined as follows:

1. An error is a systematic deviation of using simple past tense in writing recount text made by the students because of the lack of knowledge. In other words, systematic deviation can be interpreted as the deviation which happens repeatedly.

2. Writing is a process of generating, arranging and developing feelings, ideas, arguments, and thoughts in the form of words in sentences.

3. Simple past tense is used to describe a completed activity which happened in the past. In other words, it starts in the past and ends in the past.

4. A recount text is a report of events or activity happens in the past. It has three structures; orientation, sequence of event, and re-orientation.