

CHAPTER I

Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

English is the most important issue in the world for this era. According to Wil (2015) people often talk about English as a global language or lingua franca with more than 350 million people around the world speaking English as the first language and more than 430 million speaking it as the second language. Moreover, as international language, English is often used in every each part of life, for example on journal writing.

English is one of international languages which is the tool for communication and the device to express our mind both in speaking and writing, so we should know how to use English in the right way with correct grammatical rules and functions.

According to Kalend. (2006) “Grammar is an essential part of the use of language process, both in spoken and written language. The grammar of a language is a description of the ways in which the language uses patterns of structure to convey the meaning, so it would be impossible to learn language effectively without knowing the grammar, because grammar helps learners to identify grammatical forms, which serves to enhance and sharpen the expression of meaning”

That is why mastering grammar is very important in studying English because the students learn how to construct sentences correctly. It would be impossible to learn language effectively without knowing the grammar because it helps learners to construct sentences with correct grammatical forms, which serve to enhance and sharpen the expression of meaning.

Learning English is not easy since the learners may have difficulties. The difficulties that are encountered by every student will vary according to his/her

native language. The difficulties that are encountered by students is when they try to write something in English but the default language instead become obstacles because the deficiency of grammatical rules in English. In this case the writer focuses on Students of 2nd semester in Faculty of Letters, Christian University in Indonesia, so the default language is *Bahasa Indonesia*. In writing the words of English, students will face the problem of understanding the grammar because the English grammar is totally different from the Bahasa Indonesia's grammar. Because of these, there will be errors that can be found in their learning. For example, the writer found the basic errors in writing from the students' writing: "Neither Rico nor his friends wants to miss the football match". The error concerns subject and verb agreement, "*friends = plural / wants = singular*". The error usually happens when the students transfer their idea in writing without knowing the vocabulary and grammatical rules first. And the correct answer is: "Neither Rico nor his friends want to miss the football match".

In this research, the writer concerns on analyzing errors of subject / verb agreement in the writing assignments from the second semester students at the Faculty of Letters in Christian University of Indonesia, and the course is *Essay Writing*. The writer chooses the student of second semester as the subject of the research because many errors were found on their writing. Another instance, on the sentence: "*The cat sit on the mat*". The error is that verb "*sit*" does not agree with subject "*the cat*", so the correct sentence must be "*The cat sits on the mat*", because single subject must be paired by single verb, and the plural subject must be paired by plural verb too.

Based on the explanation above, the writer is interested in analyzing students' writing especially their grammatical errors of subject / verb agreement. The writer would like to carry out a research under the title of The Errors on Subject and Verb Agreement of 2nd Semester Students' Grammatical Writing of The Faculty of Letters, Christian University of Indonesia.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The problems to solve are:

- (1) What kind of errors of subject / verb agreement are made by the second semester's students of Faculty of Letters in Christian University of Indonesia?
- (2) What are the possible causes of those errors and How to solve the problem of grammatical error?

1.3 Purpose of the research

The purpose of the study are:

- (1) To describe of grammatical errors of subject / verb agreement in writing made by the second semester students of Faculty of Letters, Christian University of Indonesia.
- (2) To solve the error and identify the possible causes of the errors made by the students which contribution for lecturers and students.

1.4 Benefits of the research

This research is intended to explain subject and verb agreement in order to help students to be more carefully in their writing especially in subject and verb agreement. Moreover the students must reduce their errors when complete their writing. For example, the students should be more carefully about how to use the singular or plural subject and verb in sentences.

1.5 Methodology

In this research, the writer uses the qualitative method in which he analyzes the grammatical errors in 2nd semester students of Faculty of Letters, Christian University's writing. According to Denzin et.al. (2005), the word qualitative implies an emphasis on the qualities, processes and meaning that are not experimentally examined or measured in terms of quantity, amount, intensity, or frequency. The qualitative method of inquiry forms are considered by many social and behavioral scientists to approach investigating a research problem and they seek the answer to questions that stress how social experience is created and given meaning.

The writer should identify types of errors made by the students. First, the writer reads the students' writing and finds out the errors in sentences. Second, the writer defines and explains the errors. And third, the writer corrects the error by creating new proper sentences that conforms to the grammatical rules. For example:

The *dog drinks* his water every day.

“Dog” is a third person singular subject; “drinks” is third person singular verb. A common mistake in subject and verb agreement is to assume that present tense verbs ending in “s” (ex: drinks, runs, dances). Thus, the student must be careful about the grammatical rules especially in subject-verb agreement. Furthermore, the writer provides the correct sentences according to the grammatical rules. For instance: “The news about tsunami in Lombok are not true”. This sentence is not agree with subject and verb agreement rules. So the correct sentence must be: “The news about tsunami in Lombok is not true”. The noun ‘news’ is a non-count noun and the uses of verb must be singular verb. The noun seems like plural noun (news) but actually it is a singular noun.

1.5.1 Research Design.

The aim of this research was to analyze the students' errors in text writing. The method uses in this research is qualitative method. According to Bodgan and Biklen (2007), “Qualitative is descriptive that data collected take the form of words or pictures rather than numbers”. Therefore, the writer presents the data collected in words not numbers. Furthermore, this research is designed in a mini research to the four students. Thus the writer identify whether it is an error in students’ writing.

1.5.2 Data Sources

The subject of the research is the second semester students at Faculty of Letters at Christian University of Indonesia. The writer focuses the subject of *Essay Writing*, especially the errors of subject and verb agreement in students’ writing.

The writer only took four students' writing. Those are the four students' name in initial AA, EA, MA, and JB.