CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Chapter I, Introduction, consists of Background of the Study, Statements of the Problem, the Objectives of the Study, Significance of the Study, Scope and Limitation, Definition of Key Terms, Theoretical Framework, and Organization of the Study.

1.1. Background of study

"We are all apprentices at a craft where no one becomes a master."

Ernest Hemmingway in Reid (1989:163)

There are four language skills namely Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. The skill which is going to be discussed in this thesis is writing. What is writing actually? Charles and Jackson (1961) say "Writing is both science and art." Writing needs talent and effort, while science means that writing needs grammar and logic. That definition can make the students think that writing skill is difficult, because it needs talent, effort, grammar, and logic.

According to Langan (2001:10) writing is a skill that is not different as the skills of diving, driving, and cooking. It can be gained through hard work and practice. Reid (1989) points out that the myth which says that good writers are born, not made, is wrong. We do not need a "natural talent" to write. To be a good writer, all we need to do is doing a lot of practice and hard work. To Langan (2001:11), the difficult thing of writing is walking through the process. It is difficult to deal with the

thinking and the challenging. Writing seems difficult because it covers many things. One of the things has been mentioned by Langan above which is walking through the process. But there are still so many demands which are required in making a good writing, for example, the grammar, mechanics, punctuation, and word use. When the students have an assignment to write, they are expected to put those aspects in their writing.

The writer chooses to make this thesis because she found that the students made some errors in their narratives and she wants to dig the issue deeper. It is a pity if the students of English Department make such errors. The other reason is because the writer herself likes writing narrative and she knows about the theory and the practice of narrative writing well. With her good grade in writing narrative, she intends to do the research. At least she has already known the theory and has practiced in class.

In this study, the writer analyzes narrative writing from the point of view of grammar which is Subject-Verb Agreement. The writer chooses it because Subject-Verb Agreement is important to show whether the students master English grammar or not. It is like the basic step of making the English sentences. It is important to know the students difficulty in building a sentence using Subject-Verb Agreement.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

By making this research, the writer needs to know the answer of the questions: What types of Subject-Verb Agreement error made by the students who taking Writing I in English Department of Widya Mandala University?

1.3. The Objective of the Study

In line with the problem statements, the objectives of the study were formulated as follows:

To find the types of Subject-Verb Agreement errors which are frequently misconstructed by the students who taking Writing I in English Department of Widya Mandala University.

1.4. Significance of the Study

The results of the study are expected to arouse the awareness of the lecturers of writing class in English Department of Widya Mandala University about the students' difficulties in learning Subject-Verb Agreement by providing the information about the high frequency of occurrence of errors.

After the awareness is aroused, the findings of this study are expected to be useful for the lecturers of writing class. They can improve their techniques in teaching Subject-Verb Agreement by knowing the causes of the errors. Hopefully, the errors which the students may take in learning this pattern can be prevented or minimized.

1.5. Scope and Limitation

In this study, the subjects of this study were limited to the students who take writing I class in English Department of Widya Mandala University Surabaya who enroll in the academic year of 2005-2006.

Errors in writing narrative cover so many things, such as errors of grammar, errors of mechanics, errors of punctuation, and errors of word use. In this research, the writer focuses on the grammar errors. The limitation is in how they write correctly according to proper English grammar. Grammar also consists of many things, such as

Subjects and Verbs, Sentence sense, Fragments, Run-Ons, Standard English Verbs, Irregular Verbs, Subject-Verb Agreement, Pronoun Agreement and Reference, Pronoun Types, Adjectives and Adverbs, Misplaced Modifiers, and Dangling Modifiers. However the writer only takes Subject Verb Agreement. The thesis emphasizes on the narrative writing and the errors of using Subject Verb Agreement.

1.6. Definition of key terms

To avoid the confusion in understanding the terms, the writer provides the definition of the terms which are found in the thesis. The key terms of this thesis are:

a) Writing.

To Kiefer (1983:1), writing means a longer logical thought composed of any number of sentences supporting the central idea of the paragraph.

b) Narrative.

According to Kiefer (1983:31), narrative is a detailed writing from personal experience that will best explain a situation or create the desired impression.

c) Grammar.

Burton-Roberts (1997:296) writes, "A grammar is the description of a language by means of a general definition of 'sentence' in that language.

d) Errors.

Corder (1967) as quoted by Dulay (1982) identified error as mistake, and defined the term "error" as the systematic deviation due to the learner's skill developing knowledge of the target language.

Dulay (1982) does not differentiate the terms "error" and "mistakes".

In this study, the writer does not differentiate the terms "error" and "mistakes" either.

1.7. Theoretical framework

According to Kiefer (1983), making a good narrative means making "a longer logical thought composed of any number of sentences supporting the central idea of the paragraph." The criteria of writing a good narrative and the strategies of writing a good narrative can also be found in this research. According to the Occawl-online.com (June 2006), the criteria can be seen through the content, the organization, and the style of the writing. The criteria lead the discussion to the strategies of writing a good narrative. According to Purves, Takala, and Crismore (1984:2), there are many strategies in writing, but the strategy which sharpen the students' ability is reviewing again. Since the research discusses on problem and error, the theory of the errors in writing a narrative is also mentioned. Like Langan (1985) says, mistakes the students make in writing are mistakes of grammar, mistakes of mechanics, mistakes of punctuation, and mistakes of word use. The writer also presents the theory of Subject-Verb Agreement.

1.8. Organization of the study

The study consists of five chapters. Chapter one, Introduction, consists of background of the study, statement of the problem, the objective of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation, definition of key terms, theoretical framework, and organization of the study. Chapter two, Review of Related Literature, consists of review of the related literature, theory of writing, theory of narrative

writing, the errors in writing narrative, the criteria of a good narrative, the strategies of writing a good narrative, theory of Error Analysis, theory of Subject-Verb Agreement, and previous study. Chapter three, Research Method, consists of research design, subject of the study, research instrument, procedure of collecting data, and procedure of data analysis. Chapter four, Finding and Discussion of the Finding, consists of the findings, the summary of the findings, the Subject-Verb Agreement, the discussion of the findings, and the students' problem in writing narrative. Chapter five; Summary, Conclusion, Suggestion.