CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the background of the study, the research problem, the objective of the study, the significance of the study, the scope and limitation of the study, and the definition of key terms.

A. Background of the Study

English is considered as a globalized language and easily accepted in the eyes of the world. As an international language, the role of English has been strengthened, whereas English influences international media, business and politics. In some countries like America, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, and Netherland, English is utilized as the first language. In the mean time, in Indonesia, English becomes a foreign language.

As the result, English is learnt by the students in Indonesia as a foreign language after learning their national or local language. Consequently, English is difficult to learn due to big differences between the two languages which influence the students ability in studying skill of the language.

There are four important skills in learning English which are classified again into two sections. Those are receptive and productive skills. Reading and listening skills are categorized as receptive skills, because the students are involved in receiving messages. Writing and speaking skills are regarded as productive skills which the students are involved in a language production

(Harmer, 1991). However, this research focuses only on productive skills particularly in writing.

As a productive skill, writing needs the process in which the students have to learn words, phrase, clauses, and to arrange them into a grammatically correct sentence, so it makes writing become the hardest skill to learn for second and foreign language learners. This skill is not a simple task which requires plenty of time to not only generate and organize ideas, but also to translate the ideas into understandable writing by using grammatical rules correctly, and it takes a process that requires many practices to be a good writing.

However, it is supported by Richard and Renandya (2002). They say that writing is not an easy skill, because it is generating, organizing, and translating the ideas into an easy and enjoyable text to read.

According to Littlefair (1991), there are some types of writing texts which each of them has their own rules and functions, such as descriptive text, narrative text, recount text, report text, and argumentative text. In this study, the writer focuses on students' descriptive writing. Meanwhile, the students often make errors in using subject verb agreement when they write a descriptive text. The students have several kinds of rules to determine the verb which agrees with its subject.

Based on the interview with the English teacher of SMKN 2 Kediri in preliminary study, the teacher says that the students have learnt tenses so many times, but when there is a writing practice, some students still find it difficult to

apply the basic grammar such as the use of subject verb agreement. So, there are still many errors found in their writing.

Moreover, a telephone interview was carried out to the eleventh grade students of SMKN 2 Kediri by the researcher. Some students say that sometimes they find difficulties to differentiate whether the sentence is verbal or nominal, and they have to use singular or plural verb. As the result, when they practice in writing, they often use verb which is not suitable for the subject such as a singular verb for a plural subject or vice versa and the misuse of *to be* in the nominal sentence.

Here, there is a difference between learners' mother tongue and English. In an English sentence, the verb changes according to when the event occurs such as in the present, in the past and in the future, while in an indonesian sentence, there is no changing even though the event comes in different times. As a consequence, subject verb agreement errors are often made by the students because of the difference. Interestingly, errors are important in a process of learning and they may actually become an essential part in learning a language.

There are some previous studies related to the theoritical bases above which have same discussion about the topic of this study. The discussion came previously by Noori et al. (2015), Karim et al. (2015), Alahmadi (2019), and Murshidi (2014).

Noori et al. (2015) conducted a study the frequency of subject-verb agreement errors, the prevalent type of errors and the causes of such errors

among thirty (30) Iraqi secondary school students. The result of this study revealed that the most subject-verb agreement errors was the use of verb be.

Karim et al. (2015) analyzed errors of agreement between subject and verb among tertiary level EFL learners at the International Islamic University Chittagong, Bangladesh. They found that the students commited highest number of errors of agreement between verb and plural subject.

Alahmadi (2019) investigated and classified subject verb agreement grammatical errors made by Saudi students in the foundation year at Taibah University. The study found that singular subjects appeared to be the most commited in students' writing.

Murshidi (2014) investigated frequent grammatical error which is the subject verb agreement and some punctuation errors which were made by 15 male students from different colleges in the United Arab Emirates University. The finding showed that the most frequent for subject verb agreement error is the singular verb not to agree with the plural subject. Moreover, the punctuation errors were capitalization, comma, period, semicolon, and quotations.

Error analysis is needed in language learning because the output of the study can be useful to find out the students' difficulties which sometimes bring errors, so it can reduce the students' errors. However, making error is a part of learning.

Considering the importance of learning, understanding and mastering subject verb agreement in a sentence and the fact that students often make errors in the learning process, the researcher is interested in analyzing the errors made by the students in using subject verb agreement in writing descriptive text. Thus, this research is entitled "Subject Verb Agreement Errors in Writing Descriptive Text Made by the Eleventh Grade Students of SMKN 2 Kediri".

B. The Research Problem

Related to the description in the background of the study above, the researcher formulated the problem, as follow:

1. What are types of subject verb agreement errors in writing descriptive text made by the eleventh grade students of SMKN 2 Kediri?

2. What type of subject verb agreement errors in writing descriptive text is the most frequently made by the eleventh grade students of SMKN 2 Kediri?

C. The Objective of the Study

Based on the statement of the research problem above, the objectives of the study are:

1. To find out and describe the types of subject verb agreement errors in writing descriptive text made by the eleventh grade students of SMKN 2 Kediri

2. To find out and describe the most frequent type of subject verb agreement errors in writing descriptive text made by the eleventh grade students of SMKN 2 Kediri

D. The Significance of the Study

Both theoretical and practical aspects can be seen in the significance of this study. They are described as follows:

Theoritically, the result of this study is expected to contribute to the development in learning grammar in English writing, especially in the case of subject verb agreement in descriptive text.

Practically, for the students of SMKN 2 Kediri, they can increase their skill in writing English text and they are not confused anymore to define subject and verb in writing, especially in descriptive text. For the teacher, the result of the study will help the teacher to find out their students' weakness, especially in error writing and understanding on subject verb agreement so they can take same steps to increase students' skill in writing descriptive text. For the writer, it can improve her knowledge about subject verb agreement and writing skill.

E. The Scope and Limitation of the Study

To make the study not too boarded, the researcher limits the scope of this study. In order to make the study accurate and be able to achieve those goals anticipated by the researcher, this study tries to explain subject verb

agreement errors in writing descriptive text created by the eleventh grade students of SMKN 2 Kediri.

F. The Definition of Key Terms

To avoid reader misuderstanding, the researcher defines some key terms used in this study as follows:

1. **Error:** When the student learns something and consistently gets wrong

2. **Error analysis:** An important study to reduce students' errors

3. **Subject verb agreement:** The suitability of the subject with the main verb

4. **Descriptive text:** A text which describes people, thing, or place by using words.