

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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1.1 Background of the Study.

According to Paulston (1976) in "Teaching English as a second Language" the writing skill is put at the end of the four language skills as it is regarded the most difficult one among those language skills : listening, reading, speaking and writing. The writing skill is very important to express the feelings, experiences and thoughts to others. To some people maybe the speaking skill is the most important one, but it is very good if a person can speak as well as write.

Based on the writer's experience and observation, the students at Senior High School face difficulties in expressing their ideas when they try to make a composition. The difficulties can appear because of language problem, namely limited vocabulary or unfamiliar structure, or because of organizational problem like limited topic, illogical thinking, disunited ideas. Besides that, the students may be confused with sentence formation. Those are agreement, predication, modification and parallelism so that their writing is not meaningful.

✓ Byrne (1988: 4) said, "In writing, we have to compensate for the absence of these features : we have to keep the channel of communication open through our own efforts and to ensure, both through our choice of sentence structure and by the way our sentences are linked together and sequenced, that the text we produce can be interpreted on its own".

Hill-Miller (1983: 1) stated that grammar is important. Grammar is simply the set of rules and conventions that govern modern English language usage. As a set of rules, grammar tells us what is correct or incorrect about using certain words. As a set of conventions, grammar controls meaning. This is to say that grammar provides a common pattern of rules for everyone to follow and assures that people will understand each other.

Besides, Mifflin English (1984: 144) said, "When you speak and write, your purpose is to convey a message to someone else. You want to make yourself clear, and you want to express yourself correctly so that your words will be understood. Therefore, you need to use the English language in certain accepted ways".

However, the writer was doubtful whether the students' mistakes were caused by their confusion of

sentences formation.

Realizing that grammatical errors is an important part in writing and knowing that Senior High School students still face a lot of difficulties in writing, the writer is interested in making the grammatical errors analysis on it, in order to know the real cause of the difficulties and find a good solution to the problem.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In line with its background, the major problem of this study was formulated as follows:

1. What types of the agreement of subject and predicate errors do the First year students of PETRA 3 Christian Senior High School Surabaya make in their writing composition?
2. What types of the parallelism errors do the First year students of PETRA 3 Christian Senior High School Surabaya make in their writing composition?

1.3 The Objective of the Study

The major objective of this study is to find out the elements of writing which had been mostly misconstrued by the Senior High School students Sura-

baya. To achieve this major objective, the following sub-objectives should be achieved first:

1. To find out the types of the agreement of subject and predicate errors made by the first year students of PETRA 3 Christian Senior High School Surabaya in their writing composition.
2. To find out the types of parallelism errors made by the first year students of PETRA 3 Christian Senior High School Surabaya in their writing composition.

1.4 The significance of the study

The findings of this study are expected to be used by the English teachers as feedback to improve their ways of teaching writing. Hopefully, by so doing, they will help their students minimize (if not get rid of) making grammatical errors in writing.

As for the field of language teaching research, the findings of this study will, either, support or disconfirm Corder's statement (1967),

"Errors provide to the researcher evidence of how language is learned or acquired, what strategies or procedures the learner is employing in his discovery of the language".

Hopefully, the result if this study would give us

better information about how students learn to make a good composition in their efforts to master English as a Foreign Language.

1.5 The Assumptions

This study was carried out under the following assumptions:

1. The students have been taught all tenses because this study includes the students' ability to apply the subject-predicate agreement and parallelism in all tenses.
2. The students have been taught to put nouns in the subject position of a sentence of which the word order is 'subject + verb'.
3. The students have been taught to put conjunctions in their positions of a sentence in all tenses.

1.6 The Theoretical Framework

This study was based on the theories of Contrastive Analysis, Error Analysis, and Interlanguage, since these theories are dealing with errors of second or Foreign Language learners.

1.6.1 Contrastive Analysis

According to Dulay et al.(1982: 140), contrastive analysis (henceforth CA) treatment of errors based on a comparison of the learner's native language and target language. Differences between the two were taught to account for the majority of an L2 learner's errors. Consequently, it believes that "most second language learners'errors would result from their automatic use of L1 structure when attempting to produce the L2" (Dulay, Burt and Krashen, 1982: 110). In short, L2 learners'errors are mostly caused by the interference of their native language.

Considering that Junior High School students can be categorized as the students who get English for the first time, their errors might be mostly caused by the interference of their first language. Therefore, this theory is discussed in this study although "present research results suggest that the major impact the first language has on second language may have to do with accent, not with grammar or syntax" (Dulay, Burt and Krashen, 1982: 96). It is underlined by Taylor and Marton's opinions quoted by Rod Ellis (1986) in his book "Understanding Second Language Acquisition". Taylor (1975) says that the errors produced by the elementary

students rely on transfer; while Marton (1980: 24) says that interference of the first language will always be present in classroom or foreign language learning.

1.6.2 Error Analysis

Error analysis (henceforth EA) treats errors as systematic deviation due to the learners still gradually building on L2 rule system (Dulay, Burt and Krashen, 1982: 138-139).

There are three sorts of error studies which have the same general conclusion : "The majority of errors made by second language learners are not interlingual, but developmental" (Dulay, Burt and Krashen, 1982: 173). They are proportion studies, quasi-proportion studies and occurrence studies. Proportion studies classify and count errors of which the researcher is able to state in quantitative terms the relative proportion of each errors type. Quasi-proportion studies analyze and classify errors of which they permit qualitative estimates about the proportion of interlingual and developmental errors. Occurrence studies report the occurrence of particular developmental or interlingual errors (Dulay, Burt and Krashen, 1982: 174).

To achieve the objective of this study, the writer

analyzed, counted, classified the students' errors and then put them in a rank order. This study therefore, belongs to the "proportion studies" and "quasi-proportion studies".

1.6.3 Interlanguage

In the Interlanguage (henceforth IL) Analysis as quoted by Croft (1980: 85), Sridhar says "the learner's deviations from target language norms should not be regarded as undesirable errors or mistakes; they are inevitable and a necessary part of the learning process".

According to Selinker (1972: 37), there are five processes which are central to language learning, namely: language transfer, transfer of training, strategies of second language learning, strategies of second language communication and overgeneralization of target language linguistic material. Each process forces fossilizable or error material upon surface Interlanguage utterance.

In this study, the writer uses this theory to see the students' errors which were caused by their wrong learning strategies, such as omission errors, addition errors and misuse errors.

1.7 Definition of Key terms

To avoid misunderstanding and the ambiguity of the terms used in this study, the writer would like to give the definitions of some key terms used in this study.

1.7.1 Syntax

The study of the patterns by which words are combined to make sentences (Stryker, 1969: 21).

1.7.2 Syntactic Construction

A grammatical construction, having only free forms as immediate constituents and having a formal characteristic, identifying is as a compound (Cove, Ph.D. and The Webster, 1986: 2321).

1.7.3 Grammar

Grammar means study of rules for, the combination of words into sentences and the forms of words (Hornby, AS, 1974: 375).

1.7.4 Errors

Corder states that errors are systematic, that is, they fall into certain patterns and show a consistent system. The errors show the learner's knowledge of the

target language (Corder, 1974: 24-25).

1.7.5 Error Analysis

Error analysis is a procedure which deals with collecting samples of learner language, identifying the errors according to their hypothesized causes and evaluating seriousness of the errors (Ellis, 1986: 51).

1.7.6 Writing

Something which related with written form of language (Procter, 1978: 1274).

1.7.7 Composition

Composition is an arrangement of words and ideas. It consists of paragraphs. Each paragraph should be a complete thought. Sentences consist of words. Each word should be carefully chosen to express just what one wants to say (Matthew and Fergenson, 1980: 2).

1.8 Limitation of the Study

Grammar is study of rules for, the combination of words into sentences and the forms of words (Hornby AS, 1974: 375). Grammar concerns with usage. It includes

syntactical rules and morphological rules. Syntax has four forms namely agreement of subject and predicate, predication, modification and parallelism.

Being aware of how broad the topic of this study would be, the writer found it necessary to limit it. This study was only concern with the agreement of subject and predicate and parallelism in the writing composition of the students' subject.

For the sake of this study, the writer would like to limit the population only the first year students of PETRA 3 Christian Senior High School Surabaya who have got writing practice before.

1.9 Organization of the Study

This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter I presents the background of the study, statement of the problem, the objective of the study, the significance of the study, the assumptions, the theoretical framework, the definition of the key terms, the limitation and the organization of this study.

Chapter II deals with the review of related literature and studies which are relevant to this study.

Chapter III presents the methodology of the study which consists of the research method, the instruments

of this study, the procedures of collecting the data, the data analysis and findings and the data analysis techniques.

Chapter IV discusses the interpretation of the findings.

Chapter V is the conclusion which presents the result of this study and some suggestions concerning the study.