

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of Study

In learning English, foreign language learners will learn two aspects that must be mastered. Firstly is the language components such as vocabulary, sound and grammar. Secondly is the four language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. As stated by Richards (2002), writing in second language (L2) is commonly seen as the most challenging language skills for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners to master compared to listening, reading or speaking skills. This is mostly because in order to produce a good piece of writing, EFL Learners must be able to have the ability in converting thoughts into writing. In order to present these thoughts into the writing form, it is essential for L2 learners to pay attention to the higher level skills of planning and organizing as well as lower level skills grammatical such as spelling, punctuation, word choice, tenses and many others.

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners often feel unconfident when they are asked to write a piece of writing because they might only understand a bit of grammar rules and also they have limited vocabulary. They also have difficulty in translating information and their thought into written form. They are aware that mastering English, especially its structure or grammar is not easy.

In the process of writing an English essay, students often did some errors especially errors in grammar. There were many students who still made many errors in writing English paragraph and found difficulties in applying tenses, structure, syntax, semantic, lexical meaning, and phonology into sentences. The reason behind those grammatical errors is mostly because students might not fully understood the English grammar rules and cannot used them appropriately. In English, the grammar rules of writing is quite complicated and it needs certain comprehension for students to be able to use the grammar rules correctly. In other words, writing in English language is completely different from writing in Indonesian form. One of the example in English grammar rules is the needs to use

certain types of tenses while writing certain types of text or the needs to use a verb which is in accordance with the subjects being used in writing. Meanwhile the grammar rules in Indonesian form is less complicated than the English grammar rules. In Indonesian grammar rules, there are no differences of tenses because the verb appears in the same form most of the times and also there are no differences in the use of verb even if the subjects is either in singular or plural forms.

Grammar deals with the rules for forming words and making sentence. One of the sentences elements is verb. While, grammar is the basic element of knowledge or skill in using correct language. According to Murcia (1995) Grammar is essentially about the systems and patterns learners use to select or to combine words. Grammar must be learned by students who wanted to learn about English language because grammar is needed for them when making a writing paper. The mistakes or errors made in writing will be clearly seen when the students write it and will be read by readers.

In learning English, it is common that students make mistakes or errors in written form, especially in how to use the verb correctly based on tenses. According to Corder (1973), the errors that the students make when they learn a language is very common. The students often make grammatical errors. In this case, they make errors because of the language habit in their mother tongue is very different from English. In relation to the problem that is related with the teaching of English in Indonesia, Sulaiman (1970) even stated that most of the students have difficulty in mastering the structure of language. Structure of language deals with the rules for forming words and making sentences. In making a sentence, we need some elements. One of the sentence elements which play an important role is verb.

From this fact, we know that students still make errors in forming a sentences especially on how to use the verb correctly in a sentence according to the tenses being used. For example, the student wrote “*she go to school on foot*” while the correct sentence should be “*She goes to school on foot*”. Another example is the sentence “*he do not think before he say something*” while the correct form should be “*he does not think before he says something*”.

Sometimes students make grammatical errors. They often produce incorrect utterances. Dullay et.al. (1982) said that errors are flawed side of learning speech or writing. They are those parts of conversation or composition that deviate from selected norm of mature language performance. However, making error is fundamentally human in learning process. Therefore, it is possible for students to make errors unconsciously when they are writing. By analyzing the students' errors, it will give the important role in giving feedback for the Lecturers and researchers in order to evaluate and develop the material in teaching learning process.

In writing, students have some problems on grammar and still find difficulties to express their ideas into words or sentences especially expressing ideas through written form. The previous research done by Widiatmoko (2011), Hanani (2013) and Juwitasari (2013), showed that the students still made errors in the use of tenses. Based on the results of the researches, which has been shown by Widiatmoko, Hanani, and Juwitasari students still made errors in their writing. The reason was that the students were not familiar with English structure such as the form of verb, because they did not find such rules in Indonesian. They used surface strategy taxonomy to analyze the grammatical errors. There are four types of errors that were identified on a sentence level such as omission, addition, misformation and miss-ordering.

This study is expectedly useful for both lecturers and students. It is expected that from this research the lecturers later on can used this as reference for further research and as a contribution in teaching learning process for error analysis particularly on grammatical errors in the future. While at the same time for students, this research will helped them to be more aware of what kind of grammatical errors that they often made while writing and therefore can minimize the frequency of their errors, in which can help them to increase their English grammar. Based on the background above, the researcher is interested to identify the grammatical errors found in 10 students' writings. This research covered the analysis of two categories and also compiled the proportions, in order to see which type of errors has the highest proportion. From this analysis, lecturers can identify the nature of errors mostly happen in students' writings. It is hoped that there is

an improvement of students' ability in writing an essay. Therefore, the researcher entitles the research "An Analysis of Students' Grammatical Errors in Writing an Essay in *English for Journalism Course*".

## **1.2. Research Questions**

Based on the background of the study above, the writer formulates the research questions of this study as follow below:

1. What are the grammatical errors found on students' writings in *English for Journalism course*?
2. What type of grammatical errors' frequency is found from students' writings in *English for Journalism course*?

## **1.3. Purpose of the Study**

Related to the problems formulated above, there are three objectives in this study. The three objectives of this study can be stated as follow:

1. To find out the grammatical errors found on students' writings in *English for Journalism course*.
2. To investigate the type of grammatical errors' frequency is found mostly from students' writings in *English for Journalism course*.

## **1.4. Scope of the Study**

The scope of this study focused on finding the grammatical errors found from students' essays in *English for Journalism course*. This study will also analyzed the frequency and types of grammatical error found in 10 students' written works who were enrolled in English for Journalism course in the academic year 2018 at State University of Jakarta.

## **2.5. Significant of the Study**

After doing this research the writer hopes that the result of analysis will be useful theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this research is expected to be used as reference for further research and as a contribution in teaching learning process for error analysis in the future in order to enable the students increase the knowledge of English especially in grammar.

Practically, the result of this research can be made as information to lecturers about the grammatical error made by students in writing essays and can be used as a feedback to improve the students' grammar understanding and minimize their weakness in writing.