

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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

1.1 Background of the Study

Language is a communication tool that used to express ideas, feelings, from one to another one, whether in spoken or written form. Considering the important of language, Indonesian government has developed English as a foreign language that should be mastered by learners, based on the School-Based Curriculum which is also called as KTSP or Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan (Depdiknas, 2006) stated that learners are expected to master those four skills in order to be able to use English communicatively, which has four skills inside; listening, speaking, reading, and listening.

In educational environment, writing is one language skills that should be mastered by foreign language students, because it can be regarded as a complete language and essential to academic language learning. One of four skills that have closest relation with grammar is writing skill. Writing belongs one of difficult skill for learners in foreign language to master because in doing writing there are several components which need, such us content, organization, vocabulary, punctuation, language use, and also

grammar. It can be said that students who want to be good in writing or good writer, they must develop good sentence, whereas before developing good sentence, they should have good understanding on grammar. It actually dealing with Veit (1985) stated that learners are difficult to learn language well without having learned grammar.

Thus, every language in this world has its own rule as a structure system. From the definition itself, grammar is the fundamental in learning a language. It is a rule of language which has structural meaning. For English learners, grammar is one of important rules that should be learned before they can master English maximally because it is a basic unit of language; word, which combine together become sentences. That is why grammar is being one of components in English that is important, especially in writing skill, because where the students absolutely are going to learn how to make good sentences become good paragraph it need a rule called grammar.

Septiani, Reni (2014) had conducted a research about “The Correlation between Grammar Mastery and Writing Ability, A correlational Study at the Sixth Semester of English Education Department Students of UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta in Academic Year 2013/2014”. The researcher wants to know the correlation between grammar mastery and writing ability by conducting a test and documentation score that gotten from lecturer. The result showed that most of students got minimum score of grammar but their writing score was good. In this study, H_1 was rejected and the conclusion is grammar

mastery gave less contribution and had low correlation toward writing ability. The result showed that the correlation value belongs to weak or there is no significant correlation between grammar mastery and writing ability”.

Here, the researcher tries to make a gap from the previous study, which comes from the discussion that is too general. It can be seen from the explanation of instrument which used TOEFL test and third writing score to be correlated. It can be said like that because the researcher did not tell or describe what actually kinds of text and also what specific grammar that should master before going to write in third writing. It is impossible if students learn grammar in general, then they should write a text. As we know that every text has its own language feature, for example recount text and simple past tense or descriptive text and simple present tense. Since the result showed weak correlated, it seems that grammar still has relation with writing. By getting the gap form the previous study, the researcher wants to examine the correlation between one of terms in simple present tense which is subject-verb agreement and one of kinds of text which is descriptive text.

Why descriptive text was chosen as subject in this study, because the researcher will conduct the research in the first semester and sees to the syllabus in the first semester, there are two text types, descriptive and recount, so the researcher chooses descriptive text, as the researcher explained before that simple present tense is the basic tense to create sentences in daily life, and since it is belong to the language feature of

descriptive text, it means students have to learn the basic one first before having learn the next step (recount text which use next level of tense also, that is simple past tense).

The researcher found similar problem of previous study in eighth grade of SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Gresik when she did an observation. The researcher sees most of students have good understanding about what the feature, the aim, the generic structure of some texts, giving feedback when the teacher asked question related information of text, but unfortunately they have some mistakes or errors in constructing the sentence well, especially in the agreement of subject and verb toward how to create a good sentence. It can be concluded that they are able to understand how to make a good paragraph by guiding the generic structure of some text, but it was not same in writing skill of making a good sentence, there were some mistakes in grammatical rules, that is subject-verb agreement; in this study only focus on simple present tense, considering that simple present tense stated in syllabus become basic rule for students to make and use sentences to communicate in daily life, beside that it is the language feature of descriptive text.

As we know that subject-verb agreement is one of terms provided at seventh until eighth grade of junior high school, but the fact, there are some errors or mistakes when learners start creating a sentence. Students are not expected only to be able to share ideas in their writing, but also be able to write correctly. For example, the changing of verb depend on the subject by differentiate the tenses (this study uses simple present tense), “I

am a doctor” “They are my parent” “We are good friends”, or the plural and singular subject in order to add –s and –es, for example the word “go”, it can be added by “-s” or “-es” if the subject is singular, and there is no add of “-s” or “-es” if the subject is plural, “Diana goes to school by feet” “The plane goes fast on the air” “They go to Surabaya Zoo” “John and I go to Grandmother’s house”, and also auxiliary verb of “has” or have”.

Based on explanation of the fact above, the researcher sees that subject-verb agreement mastery may affect students’ writing descriptive text ability. So the researcher decides to conduct a study about “*The Correlation between Subject-Verb Agreement Mastery and Students’ Writing Descriptive Text Ability at Eighth Grade of SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Gresik*”. This study will be conducted at SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Gresik in order to know whether there is any significant correlation between those two variables as mentioned above. The researcher hopes that by conducting this study, the students’ writing ability, especially in writing descriptive text will be better, because they know what problem that will be faced if they want to construct some sentences become a text and what grammatical structure that should be mastered before going to write a sentence well.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Related the description of the background of this study, the researcher formulates the problem statement of this study as follows:

“Is there any significant correlation between subject-verb agreement mastery in students’ writing descriptive text ability at eighth grade of SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Gresik?”

1.3 Objective of the Study

In line with the problem statement above, the objective of this study is to know the correlation between subject-verb agreement mastery and students’ writing descriptive text ability at eighth grade of SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Gresik.

1.4 Significance of the Study

In this study, the researcher attempts to know the significant correlation between subject-verb agreement mastery and students’ writing descriptive text ability of eighth grade of SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Gresik. Therefore, the researcher divides the significance into two, those are as follows;

1.4.1 Theoretical Significance of the Study

It is expected that the result of the study can give a contribution which is literacy source for teacher or students about the correlation study between subject-verb agreement and students’ writing descriptive text ability in similar context.

1.4.2 Practical Significance of the Study

The research result is expected to be as a guide or study reference for teacher or students in teaching and learning activity about the important of grammar which will be applied in writing class in eighth grade in certain type of text, which is called descriptive text.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The researcher makes a scope to the study to **correlation between subject-verb agreement mastery and students' writing descriptive text ability**.

The limitation of this study is only focused on subject-verb agreement mastery in the form of **simple present tense**, considering that that tense stated in syllabus become basic rule for students to make and use sentences to communicate in daily life, besides, it is the language feature of descriptive text.

1.6 Hypothesis of the Study

To achieve the objective of the study which is want to know correlation both two variables mentioned above, the researcher decides the hypotheses as follows;

H_0 : There is no significant relationship between subject-verb agreement mastery and students' writing descriptive text ability at eighth grade of SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Gresik.

H₁ : there is significant relationship between subject-verb agreement mastery and students' writing descriptive text ability at eighth grade of SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Gresik.

Based on the previous research, Susanto (2010) stated in his thesis that every sentence needs a verb. It may be a single word that clarifies the quantity of subject, whether the subject is singular or plural. It also may contain more than one word, usually has a tense, to indicate whether the time is in present, past, or future. It means subject and verb have close relationship that will give an effect to the both of their form, actually in creating a sentence; the verb will change the form to follow the subject in an agreement or rules. It can be said, to make good sentence become good paragraph needs well mastery about the agreement of subject and verb. Meanwhile, descriptive text is one of text that consist at least two paragraph, based on its generic structure that in the first paragraph tells about the identification generally about certain topic, and second paragraph describes more detail. By this short explanation, the researcher try to make a hypothesis that if the students have well mastery in subject verb agreement, it may has a relation in their ability in writing descriptive text.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

Some definitions of terms are given to avoid misunderstanding which used in this study as follows;

Correlation refers to relation between two or more things which are subject-verb agreement mastery and students' writing descriptive text ability.

Subject-Verb Agreement Mastery refers to the ability to arrange the subject and verb one correctly in terms of rules or agreement.

Writing Descriptive Text Ability refers to one of skills that should be achieved by students at eighth grade of SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Gresik which is called by writing process in delivering ideas through written text in the form of description on what a portrait is look like in detail.