CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

English now is an international language. As a part of global society, people in every country in the world should be able to communicate in English. Like other languages, English has its language structure called grammar.

Grammar is the structure of a language. People who start to learn a language must learn its grammar. Brown (1994:204) stated that learning language also means learning its grammatical system. Grammar is considered to be the system that all speakers of a language learn earlier (Cook, 1969). Some people may think it is unimportant to use correct grammar because they can understand each other when they talk. But for people who are seriously learning a foreign language, they have to learn its grammar. A grammar of a language tells us what we have to know in order to have native-like competence in the language. The users of correct grammar are also considered as more educated.

In writing, grammar's role is to provide a structure and a form for the words of a sentence so their meaning becomes clear. For second language learners, writing is an extension of listening and speaking. And of course, grammar is being one important subject taught. Teachers or lecturers teach their students how to write correctly. This means that they have to use correct grammar in formal situation.

Second language learners usually transfer sentences they make from their first language to other language. Ellis (1985:22) stated that transfer will be negative if differences between two languages lead to interference that may finally result in the making of errors. Learning a foreign language may have some problems. The most significant problem in acquiring a foreign language is the habit system of the native language.

There are two kinds of errors that may result from language transfer (Littlewood, 1984). The first is 'interlingual' that means errors made by transferring rules from the native language to other language. The second is 'intralingual' that means errors performed when students have already had enough knowledge of the target language.

Brown (1994:204) also stated that learning a foreign language is like any other learning, in which making errors often occurs. Making errors usually occurs during the process of second language acquisition.

In this thesis, the writer observed Indonesian students who learn English in the English Department of Airlangga University. Here the writer focused on the errors found in the students' work. The writer chose a subject named Writing II because in this subject students are taught about English grammar and use it in written form. Writing II is the continuation of Writing I where students had already studied basic grammar.

For addition, the writer also gives some examples of Indonesian grammar (articles, agreement, passive voice, and tenses) to be compared with English grammar. Articles (artikula) in Indonesian are used with basic nominal, such as <u>si</u>

kancil; <u>sang</u> dewi; <u>para</u> pelajar. Agreement (pronomina) is divided into two categories, pronomina intratekstual and pronomina ekstratekstual. Pronomina intratekstual is used to change the nomina that is placed in the sentence/s, such as in the sentences "<u>Pak Karta</u> supir kami. Rumah<u>nya</u> jauh." Pronomina ekstratekstual is used to change the nomina that is placed outside of the sentence, such as in the sentence "Itu yang <u>kutulis</u>.". Passive voice (verba pasif) is often started with prefix *di-* or *ter-*. For example is "Adik <u>diantar</u> ayah ke sekolah." Tense form in Indonesian is quite different with tense form used in English. Indonesian tenses usually use time sequence to explain about something that happen or already happened, but the verb used is not change. For example is "Saya pergi ke Jogja <u>seminggu yang lalu</u>."

1.2 Statement of the Problem

From her observation, the writer tried to figure out two questions below:

1. What is the most common grammatical error between four types of errors (articles, agreement, passive sentences, tenses) which happen in the work of students in Writing II in regular class at the English Department of Airlangga University?

2. What are the types of learner's errors of the English Department students at Airlangga University?

1.3 Objective of the Study

Based on the statement of the problem above, the objective of this study were:

1. To find out the most common grammatical error between four types of errors (articles, agreement, passive sentences, tenses) which happen in the work of students in Writing II in regular class at the English Department of Airlangga University.

2. To find out the types of learner's errors of the English Department students at Airlangga University.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to add students' knowledge in using correct grammar and help them to avoid errors. This study is also expected to be useful for those who are concerned with second language learning.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

The data for this study consists of 20 students' work of 26 students who followed Writing II in regular class. The writer limited the discussion to only four error types: articles, agreement, passive sentences, and tenses, and ignored other types of errors. This limitation is due to time, knowledge, and fund.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

- **Error** : a systematic deviation when a learner has not learned something and consistently gets it wrong. (Norrish, 1983:25)

- **Grammar** : the rules by which words change their forms and are combined into sentences. (Longman, 1998:453)

- **Grammatical Errors** : an unsystematic scientific methods which provide us information and guidance necessary to learn the language. (Murthy, 2003:2)

- **Language Transfer** : the result of falling back on old knowledge, the first language rule, when new knowledge is lacking. (Odlin, 1989:26)