CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I.1.Background of the Study

Language is one thing that cannot be separated from human life. Human needs language as an instrument to express his thought. It is basically used to perform communicative functions and the most important function is the communication of information. That is why all normal human beings speak at least one language (Aronoff, 1989 : 2). Language, like other skills, does not come naturally. Man has to be taught how to use it. He, then, has a stake in understanding how language is used and how it is organized.

In using a language, man makes mistakes, even more in using a second language. He sometimes does not realize that he has made a mistake especially when he speaks. As long as both speaker and hearer can understand each other, they can keep the conversation running. It seems that they feel comfortable with their way of talking. Based on the standard English, for instance, people tend to say "*I spent the rest day at home*" rather than the correct form "*I spent the rest of*

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the day at home". While speaking " *He might could do that* " communication is not impeded even though the verb is not correct. It is understood that the speaker means " *He might be able to do that* " It can be seen in these cases that it is not easy to analyze such sentences in oral communication because the point in conversation is how to transfer ideas from the speaker so that the hearer can give an immediate feedback even though the sentences are not grammatically structured.

However, the mistakes can be found further more in written works. For example:

- *There is a general opinion that the intelligent of the nation is determined by the people.*

- *Indonesia has population that is the third biggest.*

- *It cannot be forgotten along his life. So do I.*

It can be seen that such sentences often appear in writing. The writer seems unconscious of the sentence structure and could not formulate the sentence structurally. In those sentences, the use of the words

'intelligent, and so' are wrong. So, the correct forms
for those sentences are:

- *There is a general opinion that the
  intelligence of the nation is determined by
  the people.*

- *Indonesia has the third biggest population.*

- *It cannot be forgotten along his life.
  Neither can I.*

Thus, it is easier to analyze sentences in writing
since it is the nature of our minds to be more
efficient when dealing with the visible than with the
audible. So, the data, sentences, may be studied
(Nelson, 1958: 225).

It seems that man has difficulties to reproduce
what he has thought in written language because he has
to perform the correct form of the structure, the
structure of English grammar for instance. Of course,
they are not only facing these grammatical rules when
they are writing, but also outlining, styling, develop-
ing paragraph, vocabulary, and spelling. However, each
word should be composed grammatically in a written
language. This reality is also found in the work of the

students of the English Department of Airlangga University. The students often find some problems when they write in English. These problems may create some errors of grammar in their writing works.

The errors in grammar done by the students can be easily found in composition, an exercise to perform their writing ability. In writing a composition, they have to put together words to make good sentences and they also have to put together their thoughts appropriately. All of these are put together in a written language. It is basically important for them to perform the correct form of the written works based on the structure of English grammar.

While writing their compositions, students, whether or not they realize, do make mistakes in grammar. These grammatical errors could be the actual problems that they face especially when they write in English. It is necessary for them to have the ability to produce and comprehend sentences in accordance with grammatical rules. They have mastered grammatical rules, of course, and known a system that enables them to create well organized sentences based on linguistic competence they have gained. The errors of grammar in

writing made by the students vary considerably. However, there are some errors that can be easily predicted since they keep making the same errors over and over. For example :

- *In the camp, what his mother worried about <u>was</u> happened.*

- *Mother always <u>tell</u> us to try everything first.*

- *Every <u>children</u> learns how to express <u>their</u> <u>thoughts</u> by using language.*

From the above examples it can be seen that the use of the words *'was, tell, children,their,* and *thoughts'* are not correct. The grammatical errors of these kinds ordinary happen when the students do their writing works. Not only they do not recognize the errors, they cannot even correct them. They may even commit another error in trying to do so. Then, the correct forms for those sentences are :

- *In the camp, what his mother worried about <u>happened</u>.*

- *Mother always <u>tells</u> us to try everything first.*

- *Every child learns how to express his thought by using language.*

The fact that many students still make some grammatical errors when they write becomes the ideas behind the writing of this study. In the English Department, English is actually no longer a foreign language but it is the second language.

By describing the errors in grammar, it shows some features of the grammatical rules that somehow students do not master yet. The error analysis determines what problems students actually face in writing. It shows what kind of errors they have made. From error analysis too, it can be known the nature of the knowledge, whether or not they know the language well so that it can be discovered what they still have to learn.

Nevertheless, there are a lot of factors that may cause students to make such errors. As can be seen, writing is not merely how to put ideas into words but it particularly deals with how to sort out and organize ideas in the process of logical reasoning into grammatically structured sentences. So, the causes of making the grammatical errors could be the plot of

thinking, the lack of knowledge of the language, the allotment of time, or maybe, simply because of the students' carelessness. Thus, the focus of this study is, however, on the students' errors in grammar for example errors in agreement, tenses, and word order. The errors concerning each subject matter are not the same.

I.2.Statement of the Problem

Based on the background of the study above, the problems that will be solved in this study are:

a. What kinds of errors are found in students' works?

b. What are the most common errors made by those students?

c. Why are those errors made?

I.3.Objective of the Study

Concerning the problems above, the writer would like

a. to identify and classify the areas of difficulties which are found in students' works.

b. to find the most common errors made by those students.

c. to find the reason why the students make such errors and to help them avoid making the same errors.

I.4.Significance of the Study

The writer hopes that the result of this study is to be useful for readers, especially for those who are interested in applied linguistic studies, the language acquisition process.

It is particularly hoped to improve the students' skills in using their linguistic knowledge in writing. It is important for them to write correctly since the ability of writing appears to have a big role and writing exercises are to be of great help to increase their intellectual competence.

This study is also expected to give a contribution for teachers to provide information for the effectiveness of their teaching techniques especially those who teach writing by controlling and guiding the students. Since the errors in writing made by the students can be predicted, both students and teachers can lessen, or even avoid, of performing those predicted errors of grammar.

I.5.Scope and Limitation

Since the study deals with the errors in grammar made by students in writing their compositions, it concerns with the process of language acquisition as part of the studies of applied linguistics. It also refers to general linguistics in its application to language teaching.

Because the focus of this study is, however, too exhaustive, the writer then limits the study to only errors of grammar. Those errors are taken from the works of compositions made by students of the English Department of Airlangga University from the class of *Extensive Writing* in the second semester of 1995/1996.

I.6.Theoretical Framework

Students often find problems in writing. The problems faced by those students are not merely how to put their thoughts in written language but how the written language can be grammatically structured. In doing so, there are some problems appear in the writing work that constitute such errors in grammar.

In analyzing this study, the writer uses the theory proposed by Aronoff. According to Aronoff in his book 'Contemporary Linguistics : an Introduction',

> an error analysis sees errors as indicators of the learner's current underlying knowledge of the second language, or as a clues to the hypotheses that a learner may be testing about the second language. In this sense, errors provide us with insights into the language system that learners are acquiring and using (Aronoff, 1989:310).

In writing, whether or not the students realize they have made errors that particularly refer to the structure of the composed words. A grammatical structure is the organizing of words into sentences based on the rules of grammar of a language, the English language for instance. So, each sentence in the writing work should base on the grammatical rules that the students have already gained as their linguistic competence, the knowledge of language.

Errors are divided into two types : interlingual and developmental.

> Interlingual errors are the result of first language interference, implying that some structure from the native language has been transferred to the second language (Aronoff, 1989 :310).

For example :

- *She go to school on foot everyday.*

- *Yesterday I meet him on the way to school.*

These two examples show that the forming of verbs are not based on the rules of grammar of English language. It can possibly happen since Bahasa Indonesia does not have a tense change in any condition of time as in English.

The second type of errors is developmental. These errors arise from a mismatch between the second language learners' grammar and that of the native speaker. This kind of errors occur because the learners' attempts to acquire language are based upon their hypotheses about the language they are learning (Aronoff, 1989 :310).

For example :

- *I do not know what is this.*

- *The accident was happened suddenly.*

It can be seen how the students want to produce sentences in accordance with the rules of the second language grammar but they mismatch with the rules of grammar of their native language.

Hence, through this error analysis we can examine the language performance of students in order to determine whether the source of errors is first

language interference or developmental. It is necessary to find the reasons why students make those errors, whether, for instance, it is made naturally, the transfer of a rule from the student's first language, or the difficulty of implementing the English language rules.

> Errors can be further classified as errors of omission, addition, or substitution (Aronoff, 1989 :311).

In this case, students may omit certain items, add unnecessary ones, or exchange one element for another. Items may also be misordered or misformed. Such examples are :

- *Having the responsibility to do such job.*
- *The two seasons also can be a serious problems.*

Learning to write suitably is a difficult process and takes long practices since writing needs instruction and opportunity to do a lot of exercises (Richards, 1990). It is important for teachers to respond to students' writing in ways that encourage them to explore and develop not only their writing skills but also their language skills. Teachers should follow students' writing progress on both the discourse

and the grammatical level.

To support the previous theory proposed by Aronoff, the writer also uses the theory of writing teaching proposed by Raimes in 'The Language Teaching Matrix', that is :

> The approach to the teaching of writing leads to practice in the structure and organization of different kinds of paragraphs and texts (Raimes, 1983 in Richards, 1990 : 106).

The teaching of second language writing is more than the teaching of grammar or sentence structure. The writing teaching is meant to develop the ability to produce correct forms in writing in which students can use grammatical rules in different kinds of written texts.

The rhetorical patterns and grammatical rules used in different kinds of texts are presented in students' works. Correct sentence structure is important in writing. So, errors, especially ones that can be predicted, can be avoided by guiding and controlling what the students write through the use of written language in various texts.

I.7.Method of the Study

The method used in this study is descriptive analysis method. The writer also does library research to get the information dealing with the problems and the theory that are used from some books, dictionaries, and other printed materials in making data analysis.

I.7.1. Definition of Key Terms

In order to avoid any misinterpretation in understanding the study, the writer gives some key terms which are required.

a. problem :

refers to errors in grammar done by students in writing their composition or *Extensive Writing*.

b. error :

the situation where something is done incorrectly, for example : the errors in grammar.

c. composition :

a piece of writing work formed by putting words together in certain way orderly and grammatically.

d. grammar :

a system of rules of a language needed to form and

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interpret sentences. It may be called 'structure'.

e. extensive writing course :

one of the selective subjects offered in the

Department of English with the focus of developing

students' ability in writing.

f. sentence :

a word or related group of words expressing a

complete thought.

g. written language :

a certain way of performing language by using words

as the visual symbolization of speech.

h. second language :

the language used to communicate beyond the native

language, its mother tongue.

I.7.2. Population

A population does not necessarily consist of
people. It can be any class of object (Hadi, 1987).

The population of this study is all errors in
grammar taken from the works of composition of
students of the English Department of Airlangga
University who take 'Extensive Writing' course on the
second semester of 1995/1996. The Extensive Writing

course is arranged to improve students' ability in writing. It also helps the students to express opinion in written language scientifically and to prepare them in writing research or thesis.

The class consists of eleven students and every student does about six works, each with different kinds of topics in one semester. The students write a given topic in one week and the works will be returned the following week after the teacher has corrected the works. So, there are about sixty works altogether.

I.7.3. Sampling

Sampling is a way of how to choose samples. Actually, there are several methods of choosing samples, such as random sampling, stratified sampling, area probability sampling, purposive sampling, proportional sampling (Hadi, 1987). However, the writer uses the purposive sampling in this study. Purposive sampling is done by picking out the samples not based on strata or area but samples are having certain characteristics since they are chosen for a certain purpose.

Thus, samples in this study are taken from the

composition works of students of the second semester of 1995/1996 in the English Department of Airlangga University who take Extensive Writing course. All grammatical errors in writing on those works are taken as samples of this study.

I.7.4. Technique of Data Collection

The data are obtained by a direct observation to the object of the study from the field research. The writer also makes some interviews to the students. To get the data for the study the writer is helped by the teacher of Extensive Writing who gives her the students' works. The writer then collects all the students' works during the semester.

The works are collected every two weeks. Then the writer makes data presentation about grammatical errors which are found in students' works.

I.7.5. Technique of Data Analysis.

In analyzing the data, descriptive method is used in this study. The data then presented. This analysis is carried on systematically:

a. observing   the data and selecting sentences that consist of grammatical errors taken from the students' works.

b. identifying and classifying all those errors in grammar.

c. making a group of errors and tabulating those errors based on the classification

d. analyzing those errors.

e. reconstructuring those errors to the correct forms

I.8.Organization of the Paper

The whole paper is divided into four chapters. The first chapter is introduction which consists of eight points: background of the study, statement of the problems, objective of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation, theoretical framework, method of the study, and organization of the paper. Chapter II discusses the general description of the object of the study. Chapter III is the presentation and analysis of the data. The last chapter is the conclusion as the result of the analysis and some suggestions to help students to solve the problems.