

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Background of the Study

Language is very important for human beings. By means of language, people are able to communicate one another and share their ideas. Without language we will have so many difficulties to convey our opinions, feelings or desires because there are no notion and acceptance in communities. It is hard to imagine how people can interact one another without language.

The discussion above is in line with the statement of Hall in *Essay on Language* :

“Language is the institution whereby human communicate and interact each other by means of habitually used oral auditory arbitrary symbols (1968:158).”

One of the important structures in language is sentence. Sentence is a group of words consisting of subject and predicate that does not depend on any larger grammatical construction (Weaver, 1957:149). Specifically, the subject of the sentence has a general characteristic and not a defining feature. It is potently absorb in relation to sentence. In sentence arrangement, the verb should be in agreement with the subject. If the subject is singular, the verb is singular too. Likewise, if the subject is plural, the verb is plural too, such as in *A fly flies* and *Flies fly*. In the first sentence, both the subject *a fly* and the verb *flies* are singular, since they are in agreement. While, in the second sentence, both the subject and predicate are plural, because they are in agreement. In this case, the singular noun *fly* is identified by the absence of the ending *-es*, but the singular verb *flies* is

signalled by the presence of the ending *-es*. Conversely, the plural noun *flies* ends in *-es*, while the plural verb *fly* does not end in *-es* to make them agree each other.

In grammar, the word *agreement* means “likeness”. To make two words agree is to make them alike in some respect. Words may agree in number, gender and case. While, the word *government* means an asymmetrical relation that holds a governor and controller and one or more dependent. The most common error encountered in relation to agreement is the failure to make subject and verb agree in number such as (*you was, we was, they was*). Furthermore, the most common error encountered in relation to government is the mistake to use the form of pronouns which function as object in sentence construction. Errors of agreement and government in speaking are sometimes difficult to avoid. In writing, however, these errors should never occur, because the writer always has time and opportunity to revise his work before presenting it to a reader.

In relation with the agreement between subject and verb, the subject determines whether the verb is singular or plural. The verb does not agree with any other part of the sentence. For example :

- (1). The door *shuts* quietly.
- (2). The doors *shut* quietly.
- (3). He *loves* me.
- (4). I *love* him.

In the sentence numbered (1), the subject *the door* is singular, so the verb is singular too. The subject noun is identified by the absence of the ending *-s*, while the singular verb *shuts* is signalled by the presence of the ending *-s*. Hence, they are in agreement. Next, in the sentence numbered (2), the subject is plural, so the verb is plural too. The subject noun is signalled by the presence of the

ending *-s*, while the plural verb *shut* is identified by the absence of the ending *-s*. That is why, they are in agreement. Further, the transitive verb *loves* in the sentence numbered (3) is followed by a pronoun as its object. The pronoun here is in the form of *me*, not *I*, because it is governed by the verb, so that it must be in objective form, too. Likewise, the word *love* in the sentence numbered (4) is transitive in nature. Consequently, if it is followed by a pronoun, the pronoun should be in objective form, too. In this case, the object pronoun is *him*, instead of *he*, since it is governed by the transitive verb *love*.

The phenomenon above stimulates the researcher to conduct a research on common errors in agreement and government in terms of their kinds and their improved versions.

1.2 The Reason of Choosing the Topic

To make utterances grammatically acceptable, agreement and government between words in sentences are so important. The right application of agreement and government will make sentences grammatical. In fact, agreement and government play a crucial role in English sentences, because agreement and government are part of grammar. Therefore, this research discusses about the errors made by the students of vocational school in order to give information to the readers how to make grammatical sentences.

1.3 The Statement of the Problem

Due to the topic of the discussion in this research, that is, errors in agreement and government, two problems are formulated as the following :

1. What kinds of errors in agreement and government are made by the first-year students of SMK St. Bonaventura I Madiun in the Academic Year of 2008 – 2009?
2. What are the degree of those errors ?

1.4 The Objective of the Study

In line with the statement of the problems, this research tries to answer the two questions as stated above, namely :

1. To describe the kinds of errors in agreement and government made by the first-year students of SMK St. Bonaventura I Madiun in the Academic Year of 2008 -2009.
2. To show the degree of those errors.

1.5 The Scope of the Study

English sentences can be discussed in terms of various aspects, such as the relation between / among their constituents, their kinds, their patterns, their meanings, etcetera. But, this research focuses its discussion on agreement and government. Agreement here includes the relation between subject and verb, subject – verb agreement in number, subject – verb agreement in person, agreement and compound subject, agreement and collective noun, the use of don't

and doesn't, reference, and demonstrative pronoun as well as agreement of a pronoun with the noun or pronoun to which it refers. Meanwhile, government includes between verb and object and preposition and object. Further, agreement and government here are discussed in connection with the errors made on those aspects. Then, this study tries to solve those problems by giving some alternative improvements on the errors.

1.6 The Significance of the Study

Generally, it is hoped that the result of this study may contribute something valuable for the readers, especially the students of SMK St. Bonaventura I Madiun in the academic years of 2008 -2009.

Theoretically, this research can help the readers to develop their abilities in agreement and government in English sentences; hence they may enhance their language competence. Practically, the result of this research may stimulate other researchers to do some other researchers on the same topic seen from different points of view.

1.7 The Meaning of Key Terms

In order to make the discussion in this study more comprehensively understandable, some key terms together with their meanings are presented below

1. Error Analysis is an analysis which provides a check on the guesses made by linguistic comparisons and an important additional source of information for

the selection of items to be included in the source of study (Corder, 1980:1190).

2. Agreement or concord is a term used in grammatical theory and description to refer to a formal relationship between elements. Whereby a form of one word requires a corresponding form of another (Deutsche, 1980:78).
3. Government is an asymmetrical relation that holds a governor and controller and one or more dependent (Lyons, 1984:116).
4. SMK St. Bonaventura I Madiun is one of Catholic vocational schools in Madiun. It is located on Jl. P.B. Sudirman Madiun.