

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Language plays a great role in our life. It is like the air we breathe, the food we eat, or the water we drink. It can be said that language is the most important means of communication for human beings. Cook states that a language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols and grammatical signals by means of which the members of a speech community communicate, interact, and transmit their culture(1969:12) . Falk states that Language is always there, and we make use of it automatically, often without any conscious effort (1973:3).

Since the use of language is so natural to all people, it may seem that language itself must be quite simple, consisting of many words but involving only a few principles which serve to control pronunciation and the organization of these words into sentences. Chomsky considers a language to be a set (finite or infinite) of sentences, each finite in length and constructed out of a finite set of elements (1957:13). However, careful investigation of any human language demonstrates that a language is an extremely complex, highly abstract, and infinitely productive system linking meanings with sounds.

Linguistics is the scientific study of language (Lyons, 1981:1). The goal of linguistics is to describe languages and to explain the subconscious knowledge all speakers have of their language. Every science, including linguistics, seeks to discover the general principles which underlie the variety of observable facts. In

human language, the facts are almost overwhelming, although linguistics has made substantial progress in describing and explaining many of the characteristics of language. It means that all the complexities of a language can be learned more deeply through linguistics study as it is apparent that people have been fascinated with language and communication for thousands of years, yet in many years we are only beginning to understand the complex nature of this aspect of human life.

Linguistics encompasses a number of sub-fields. An important topical division is between the study of language structure (grammar) and the study of meaning (semantics). Grammar encompasses morphology (the formation and composition of words), syntax (the rules that determine how words combine into phrases and sentences), and phonology (the study of sound systems and abstract sound units). Phonetics is a related branch of linguistics concerned with the actual properties of speech sounds (phones), non-speech sounds, and how they are produced and perceived (McMahon, 1994:9).

As the researcher studies the English copula and its equivalence in Indonesian, it means that he analyzes the structure of a sentence. Falk states that the syntactic system of a language is the set of principles that link the meaning of sentences with the form in which they are expressed. Meaning originates the mind, and syntax involves meaning as well as form, there is no way to explain how speakers of a language understand the meanings of sentences (1973:155).

Copula itself, as stated by Matthew, is regarded as a means by which a predicator which is lexically non-verbal, and grammatically uninflected for tense and other verbal categories, is assimilated to a construction in which a verb is an

essential element (1987:116). In other words, a copula is a word used to link the subject of a sentence with a predicate. Therefore, in this research, the researcher analyzes the copula in English and its equivalence in Indonesian in Agatha Christie's *The Mysterious Mr. Quin* to understand more deeply about the topic.

1.2 Statements of the Problem

The major problem of this research is studying copula in English and its equivalence in Indonesian. This problem is divided into:

1. What are the kinds of English copula in Agatha Christie's *The Mysterious Mr. Quin*?
2. What are the structures of English copula in Agatha Christie's *The Mysterious Mr. Quin*?
3. What are the similarities and differences of English copula and its equivalence in Indonesian in Agatha Christie's *The Mysterious Mr. Quin*?

1.3 Objectives of the Problem

Based on the formulation of the problems above, the research is aimed at:

1. Describing the kinds of English copula in Agatha Christie's *The Mysterious Mr. Quin*.
2. Describing the structures of English copula in Agatha Christie's *The Mysterious Mr. Quin*.

3. Describing the similarities and differences of English copula and its equivalence in Indonesian in Agatha Christie's *The Mysterious Mr. Quin*.

1.4 Source of the Data

In a research, source of the data refers to the subject from which data are obtained. While data itself are the material of the research. From the data, the object of research can be explained. In this research, the researcher takes the data from Agatha Christie's novel entitled *The Mysterious Mr. Quin* in both English and Indonesian version. There are many copulas in this novel and it attracts the researcher's attention to choose the novel as the source of the data. Besides that, this novel is very famous and it has many readers, so it is very qualified as the source of the data of this research.

1.5 Significance of the Study

By studying this research, the researcher hopes that the readers will get more information about English copula and its equivalence in Indonesian. It is important for the students to understand well what copula is. Therefore, in the end, they will be able to make good sentences in English and will not be confused if they have to translate them into Indonesian.

The researcher also expects that this research is beneficial for other researchers. Hopefully, they can be encouraged to make further research about English copula and its equivalence in Indonesian.

1.6 Scope of the Study

To get a detailed understanding on the topic of the discussion, the researcher limits the scope of the problem to discuss. In this research, the researcher uses syntax as the approach in the analysis. As mentioned before that syntax determines how words combine into phrases and sentences. Therefore, the researcher only analyzes the use of English copula and its equivalence in Indonesian as a part of sentences.