

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of Study

Language is a means of communication among individuals. It is a system of sounds which is structured and is used to communicate people's feelings, intentions, purpose, etc to the others. It is a special characteristic of human beings, because only human beings speak a language. Nevertheless, the ability to speak a language should be developed in a social group. This is in line with what Quran has stated in surah Ar-Rum verse 22, as follows:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ خَلْقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ السِّنِّتِكُمْ وَاللُّوَانِكُمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ  
لَآيَاتٍ لِّلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٢٢﴾

The verse explains that Allah created language for mankind in order to communicate between one and another. He creates many languages for different groups of people so each has their own language. Hence, all languages have the same function that is used for communication in the social community.

There are many languages in the world that people use to communicate. One of them is English. English is one of the international languages that is spoken by many people in this world. Also, English is a medium language among nations, so no wonder if many nations learn English. Therefore, English

is so important to be learnt and taught. One of the purposes of teaching English is to improve student's ability in communication.

Students' ability in communication refers to two ways of communication. Those are oral and written communication. Both of them are important to be mastered. The oral communication is used for communication directly, and the written communication is used for the passive or indirect communication.

Although the oral communication is dominant, the written communication, also has important role. Today, there are many kinds of communication in writing such as writing documents, letters, books, and even in writing a message via mobile phone. As Nunan (2003, p. 88) states that "writing is the mental work of inventing ideas, thinking about how to express them, and organizing them into statements and paragraphs that will be clear to a reader". In order to reach the objective of communication through writing, students are required to have a good ability in writing.

A good ability in writing means having a good ability in vocabulary, grammar, spelling and punctuation besides the content and the organization of writing. The rules of grammar help to govern the way writing takes place, and ensure that it can be easily understood by people who read it.

In writing, students usually make many mistakes, even in grammar, structure and also the content. Most mistakes that they have made are often found in writing activities such as writing an essay. Errors in the process of language learning are sometimes due to the interference from the mother tongue. Moreover, every language has different patterns and rules that should be paid

attention to the second language learners. So, it is difficult to avoid those Indonesian learners make mistakes in learning the target language (English). However, this phenomenon should be considered natural. People cannot learn language without systematically committing errors; as a matter of fact that making error is a part of learning.

The term 'error' is different to 'mistake'. The term 'error' refers to a failure to use the language system correctly caused by some factors such as carelessness, memory lapses, and physical condition, while the term 'mistake' means a performance error that is either a slip of the tongue or a failure to utilize a known system correctly. Thus, the term 'error' will be used in this research.

The writer is interested in doing this research at STKIP (PGRI) Banjarmasin, because it is one of private universities in South Kalimantan which has English Department, and the time is flexible for many students to choose the programme there, especially students which are in the sixth semester at STKIP (PGRI). The writer chose the sixth semester students because they have taken Writing IV subject. The students had learnt about genre of texts or essays, i.e. narrative, descriptive, expository and argumentative. Before doing the research, the writer did first observation and interviewed with Dina, one of English Department at STKIP (PGRI) Banjarmasin's students, who said that the most difficult thing in writing is grammar or structure. She feels difficulty to write an argumentative essay because she rarely and never practice at home. Therefore, the writer is interested to conduct the research there.

The previous study was written by Toni Haryanto (2007) entitled "*Grammatical Error Analysis in Students' Recount Texts*". It focused on recount texts. The result showed that the students made 235 grammatical errors which were classified into 153 errors in producing verbal groups, 3 errors in subject-verb agreement, 10 errors in the use of article, 30 errors in the use of preposition, 12 errors in pluralization, 23 errors in the use of pronoun, 4 errors in the use of conjunction. Furthermore, he concluded the possible causes of errors are overgeneralization, and interference. Another study was written by Emmaryana F (2010) entitled "*An Analysis on the Grammatical Errors in Students' Writing (A Case Study of the First Year Students of "SMA Negeri 1 Cigudeg-Bogor")*". It focused on recount texts. The result showed that the students made 95% errors in tense, 85% errors in spelling, 85% errors in punctuation, 85% errors in sentence pattern, 35% errors in the use of preposition, 30% errors in the use of pronoun. Therefore, those study have similarities with mine, that is about grammatical error analysis but we have different focus of study. Their study focused on recount text while the writer focused on argumentative essay.

From the description above, this study is conducted to analyze the grammatical errors in writing an argumentative essay made by the sixth semester students of English Department at STKIP (PGRI) Banjarmasin. The research is entitled: *Grammatical Errors in Essay Writing Made by the Sixth Semester Students of English Department at STKIP (PGRI) Banjarmasin in academic year 2015/2016*.

**B. Statement of Problems**

Based on the background of study above, the problems of this research can be formulated as follows:

1. What kinds of grammatical errors are made by the sixth semester students of English Department at STKIP (PGRI) Banjarmasin in argumentative essay writing?
2. What are the causes of errors made by the sixth semester students of English Department at STKIP (PGRI) Banjarmasin in argumentative essay writing?

**C. Objectives of Study**

Based on the problem formulation above, the purposes of this research are:

1. To describe the kind of grammatical errors in argumentative essay writing made by the sixth semester students of English Department at STKIP (PGRI) Banjarmasin.
2. To describe the possible causes of errors made by the sixth semester students of English Department at STKIP (PGRI) Banjarmasin in argumentative essay writing.

**D. Significance of Study**

The result of this research is expected to give contribution as follows:

1. To enrich the writer's knowledge and experience in the scientific research.
2. To provide consideration and input for educators, especially for English Lecturers in English Department at STKIP (PGRI) Banjarmasin.

3. To provide comparison for the next researcher.
4. To add library literature of Antasari State Institute for Islamic Studies (IAIN Antasari) Banjarmasin.
5. To improve the students' ability in writing by reading the result of this study.

#### **E. Limitation of Study**

Based on the research questions above, the writer will limit the discussion to analyzing grammatical error in argumentative essay writing made by the sixth semester students of English Department at STKIP (PGRI) Banjarmasin.

#### **F. Definition of Key Terms**

To avoid any misinterpretation in understanding the title of this research, the writer needs to explain some definition of key terms, as follows:

1. Error refers to a failure to use the language system correctly caused by some factors such as carelessness, memory lapses, and physical condition. Errors that the writer means in this study is based on Dulay surface strategy taxonomy in which errors can be described as ommision, addition, misformation and misordering errors.
2. Grammatical error means something done wrong or mistake in grammar. Mistake refers to a performance error that is either a slip of the tongue or a failure to utilize a known system correctly.
3. Writing is one of the language skills which is used for medium of communication , especially indirect communication. Writing is one way

to express human's ideas, opinions and thoughts about everything in mind and around them.

4. Essay is a piece of writing that methodically analyses and evaluates a topic or issue. Fundamentally, an essay is designed to get the reader's academic opinion on a particular matter. This study only concerns with argumentative essay.
5. STKIP (PGRI) is one of the private universities in Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan.