

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1; Background of the study

In the 1984 English Curriculum for Senior High School, it is stated that "plural-nouns" is one of the subtopics of English given to the third year students¹. The agreement of plural-nouns in a sentence: determiner + plural-noun + verb², as in:

<u>These</u>	<u>books</u>	are	new
- determiner	plural-noun	plural-verb	

Nouns refer to something which one may think of as either singular or plural³, as in:

- Our	<u>team</u>	<u>plays</u>
determiner	singular-noun	singular-verb

- <u>The</u>	<u>team</u>	<u>are</u>	hungry
determiner	plural-noun	plural-verb	

This pattern shows us that there are several elements required to form plural-noun pattern in a sentence. These elements are determiner, plural-noun, and verb. If one

1
Drs. Artono Wardiman, "Plurals" : Penuntun Pelajaran Bahasa Inggris Berdasarkan Kurikulum 1984 GBPP 1987 SMA Kelas IIIA3 Semester 6, Departemen dan Kebudayaan, 1987.

2
Phyllis Davis Hemphill, "Verb-Agreement of Subject and Verb" : Career English, New Jersey, Prentice-Hall¹, Inc. , 1980, p.39.

3
Dr. J.C.Richards & Drs. Made Markus, "Collective Nouns" : Creative English untuk Sekolah Menengah Atas 3, Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1981, p.83.

likes to make correct "plural-nouns" in a sentence, he should know that each of these elements must be put in the correct position. In addition, the agreement between determiners and plural-nouns, and the agreement between plural-nouns and verbs must also be correct.

Determiners such as articles: 'the', 'a', and 'an' ; demonstrative adjectives: 'this', 'that', 'these', and 'those' ; and adjectives of indefinitive quantity: 'many', 'some', 'few', 'several', 'all', 'much', and 'little' ; usually come before nouns⁴, as in: "Those people wait outside". Plural-nouns like regular plural-nouns: 'books', 'churches', 'knives', 'tomatoes', 'ways', 'ladies'; and irregular plural-nouns like: couple, deer, trousseurs, news are put after the determiners⁵, as in: The couple have a young son. Here, plural-nouns are used as the subjects of a sentence⁶. The verb form used in the agreement of plural-noun pattern in a sentence is verb-plurals⁷, as in: The -----

⁴
Marcella Frank, "Adjectives" : Modern English Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972, p.109.

⁵
Basri Syamsu and Sri Utari Subiyakto N., "Bentuk Jamak", Bahasa Inggris 3b untuk SMA, Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1988, p.18.

⁶
Phyllis Davis Hemphill, "Nouns-Definition and Usages": Career English, New Jersey, Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1980, p.28.

⁷
Roloff & Brosseit, "Agreement": Sentences, California Glencoe Publishing Co, Inc., 1979, p.245.

books are on the table. However, if the noun is always singular in their plural forms, the verb should be singular ^e, as in: The news is good tonight.

Briefly, the elements of the agreement of plural-noun pattern in a sentence is: -determiner + plural-noun + verb . Deviating from the elements and the agreement means making an error in the agreement of plural-nouns pattern in a sentence.

When occupying myself with doing teaching practice at SMA Kristen Pirngadi Surabaya, held from January 20, 1988 to April 15, 1988 I found that a large number of students still made mistakes in the agreement of "plural-noun" pattern in sentences as in :

- "These trousers is mine" instead of "These trousers are mine";
- "The audiences are interested in the speech" instead of "The audience are interested in the speech";
- "Measles are a contagious disease" instead of "Measles is a contagious disease";
- "Fruits contain vitamins" instead of "Fruit contains vitamins"; and so forth.

The English teacher told me that this problem also had come about in years before. He should take action to

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Phyllis Davis Hemphill, "Noun-Singular and Plural-Nouns; "Possessive Nouns": Career English, New Jersey, Prentice-Hall, Inc.. 1980, p.44.

get the better of this problem. However, it was not easy for the teacher to focus on which elements when teaching the pattern of "plural-nouns", as no data had showed which was the most distressing 'element of the pattern.

Considering the problem stated above and being interested in discovering what basic form of "plural-noun" pattern in a sentence the most distressing, a research on Error Analysis in the agreement of plural-noun pattern in a sentence made by the-third year students of SMA Kristen Pirngadi Surabaya was conducted.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Based on the background of this study, the major problem of this study was formulated as follows: "What elements in the agreement of the plural-noun pattern in a sentence are often greatly misused by the third year students of SMA Kristen Pirngadi Surabaya?"

To answer the forementioned major problem, the following sub-problems should be answered first:

1. Do errors in the agreement of plural-noun pattern in a sentence mostly consist of the misuse of the determiners required by articles in the agreement between determiners and plural-nouns?
2. Do errors in the agreement of plural-noun pattern in a sentence mostly consist of the misuse of the determiners required by demonstrative adjectives in the agreement between determiners and plural-nouns?

3. Do errors in the agreement of plural-noun pattern in a sentence mostly consist of the misuse of the determiners **required by adjectives** of indefinite **quantity** in the agreement between determiners and plural-nouns?
4. Do errors in the agreement of plural-noun pattern in a sentence mostly consist of the misuse of the plural-nouns required by regular plural-nouns in the agreement between determiners and plural-nouns?
5. Do errors in the agreement of plural-noun pattern in a sentence mostly consist of the misuse of the plural-nouns required by irregular plural-nouns in the agreement between-determiners and plural-nouns?
6. Do errors in the agreement of plural-noun pattern in a sentence mostly consist of the misuse of the plural-nouns required by regular plural-nouns in the agreement between plural-nouns and verbs?
7. Do errors in the agreement of plural-noun pattern in a sentence mostly consist of the misuse of the **plural-nouns** required by irregular plural-nouns in the agreement between plural-nouns and verbs?
8. Do errors in the agreement of plural-noun pattern in a sentence mostly consist of the misuse of the verbs required by full-verbs in the agreement between plural-nouns and verbs?
9. Do errors in the **agreement** of plural-noun pattern in a sentence mostly consist of the misuse of the verbs required by to be verbs in the agreement between plural-nouns and verbs?

1.3. The Objectives of the Study

The major objective of this study was to know the elements of plural-noun pattern in a sentence which had been mostly misused by the third year students of SMA Kristen Pirngadi Surabaya. To achieve this major objective, the following sub-objectives should be achieved first:

1. to know whether errors in the agreement of plural-noun pattern in a sentence mostly consist of the misuse of the determiners required by articles in the agreement between determiners and plural-nouns.
2. to know whether errors in the agreement of plural-noun pattern in a sentence mostly **consist** of the misuse of the determiners required by demonstrative adjectives in the agreement between determiners **and** plural-nouns.
3. to know whether errors in the agreement of plural-noun pattern in a sentence mostly consist of the misuse of the determiners required by adjectives of indefintive quantity in the agreement between determiners and plural-nouns.
4. to know whether errors in the agreement of plural-noun pattern in a sentence mostly consist of the mfsuse of the plural-nouns required by regular plural-nouns in the agreement between determiners and plural-nouns.
5. to know whether errors in the agreement of plural-noun pattern in a sentence mostly consist of the

misuse of the plural-nouns required by irregular plural-nouns in the agreement between determiners and plural-nouns.

6. to know whether errors in the agreement of plural-noun pattern in a sentence mostly consist of the misuse of the plural-nouns required by regular plural-nouns in the agreement between plural-nouns and verbs.
7. to know whether errors in the agreement of plural-noun pattern in a sentence mostly consist of the misuse of the plural-nouns required by irregular plural-nouns in the agreement between plural-nouns and verbs.
8. to know whether errors in **the agreement** of plural-noun pattern in a sentence mostly consist of the misuse of the verbs required by full-verbs in the agreement between plural-nouns and-verbs.
9. to know whether errors in the agreement of plural-noun pattern in a sentence mostly consist of the misuse of the verbs required by to be verbs in the agreement between plural-nouns and verbs.

These kinds of errors would be ranked from the highest to the lowest frequency.

1.4. The significance of the Study

The findings of this study are prospects as feedbacks for English teachers to improve their methods of

teaching the **agreements** of plural-nouns in a sentence. Expectantly, by doing this. the students'errors in the agreement of plural-nouns in a sentence could be decreased. Stefanus Laga Tukan (1988) stated that **Second Language Learners' Errors** would be of some help for second language teachers to have a wider horizon about second language learners' mistakes and above all to have a more positive attitude towards second language learners (their students) who make the errors . Expectantly also, the consequences of this study would keep us better-informed about how students learn the agreement-of English plural-nouns in a sentence (the agreement between determiners and plural-nouns and the agreement between plural-nouns and verbs) in their attempts to understand English as a foreign language.

1.5. The Assumptions

This study was conducted under the following assumptions:

1. The students are able to put determiners in their position before nouns.
2. The students have been able to put nouns in the subject position of a-sentence of which the word-order is "subject + verb".

⁹
 Stefanus Laga Tukan, "Second Language Learners' Errors", Surabaya, the English Departement of Unika Widya Mandala, 1988, p.1.

3. The students have mastered the Simple Present Tense, because this study includes the students' ability to apply the agreement of plural-nouns in Simple Present sentences.
4. The students have been able to make simple active sentences in the Simple Present Tense of which the word-order is "subject + the infinitive without to (+ 's for the third person singular)"
5. The students have been able to construct the passive sentences in the Simple Present Tense of which the word-order is "subject + be + past participle verb".
6. The students have been able to put adjectives in their positions of a sentence in the Simple Present Tense of which the word-order is "subject + be + adjective".

1.6. Theoretical Framework

There are 4 theories underlying this study. They are Error Analysis, Contrastive Analysis, Interlanguage, and English Plural-Nouns in a sentence.

1.6.1. Error Analysis

Error Analysis is a procedure which deals with collecting samples of learner language, identifying the errors according to their hypothesized causes, and

evaluating the seriousness of the errors .

The procedure in Error Analysis. in this study. is applied as a guidance to analyze the students. errors in terms of collecting samples, identifying and describing errors, and classifying the errors according to the surface feature of the error itself.

1.6.2. Contrastive Analysis

Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis exists in two versions: the strong version and the weak version. The strong version claims that errors can be predicted by identifying the differences between L1 and L2¹¹. The weak version of Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis claims that Contrastive Analysis can be used to identify which errors¹² are the result of interference .

In this study, the writer discussed both the strong and weak version of Contrastive Analysis, but it was only used as a helping theory to strengthen the Error Analysis.

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Rod Ellis, Understanding Second Language Acquisition, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1986, p.51-52.

11

Ibid., p.23.

12

Ibid., p.24.

1.6.3. Interlanguage

Sridhar, quoted by Croft (1980), said that the learner's deviations from target language norms should not be regarded as undesirable errors or mistakes; they are inevitable and a necessary part of the learning process ¹³ .

Selinker (1972) suggested that there are five principal processes operating in Interlanguage; namely, language transfer, overgeneralization of target language rules, transfer of training, strategies of L2 learning, and strategies of L2 communication ¹⁴ .

In this study, this theory is used to see the students' errors which were caused by applying incorrect English agreement of plural-noun pattern in a sentence (the incorrect agreement between determiners and plural-nouns and the incorrect agreement between plural-nouns and verbs)

1.6.4. Agreement of English Plural-Nouns in a Sentence

What the writer means by "plural-nouns" are ones which consist of Regular Plural-Nouns (e.g. books, keys, and tomatoes) and Irregular Plural-Nouns (e.g. men, pyjamas, family, Electronics, women-servants and sisters-in-law).

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Kenneth Croft, Reading on English as a Second Language for Teachers and Teacher Trainees, Boston-Toronto, Little, Brown and Company (Inc.), 1980, p.85.

14

Larry Selinker, "Interlanguage", in Jack C. Richards, ed., Error Analysis, London, Longman Group Limited, 1974, p.37.

There are two theories concerning with the agreement of English plural-nouns in a sentence. They are one theory concerning with the agreement between determiners and plural-nouns and one theory concerning with the agreement between plural-nouns and verbs.

Thomson said that adjectives (in this case, determiners) are used with singular and plural, masculine¹⁵ and feminine nouns. Thus, if the determiners (a, this, that) are **singular**, the nouns are singular, and if the determiners (these, those, many, a few) are plural, the nouns are plural. It can be concluded that if the determiners are plural, the nouns must be plural in the agreement of determiners and plural-nouns.

In addition, Hemphill said that if the subject of a **sentence** is plural, the verb should be plural and **if** the¹⁶ **subject** is singular, the verb should be singular. It can be concluded that if the subjects are plural-nouns, the verbs should be plural in the agreement between plural-nouns and verbs.

Both of the theories are used in a sentence at the same time, as it enabled to make the correct agreement of English plural-noun pattern in a sentence.

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A.J. Thomson and A.V. Martinet, A Practical English Grammar, Oxford University Press, 1980, p.15.

16

Ibid., p.84.

1.7. Definition of Key Terms

To help the readers to get clarity, it is necessary to include the following key terms used in this study, namely: errors and agreement:

1.7.1. Errors

Chomsky (1965) as quoted by Dulay et al. (1982) divides the cause of errors into two, namely:

- (1) Competence errors caused by lack of knowledge of the rules of language.
- (2) Performance errors caused by memory lapses, physical states such as fatigue, and psychological conditions like strong emotion .

Corder (1967), as quoted by Dulay et.al., identified performance errors as mistakes, and defined the term "errors" as the systematic deviations due to the learner's errors still developing knowledge of the L2 rule system. While Dulay et.al., who do not restrict the term "error" to competence based deviations identifies that error is any deviation from a selected norm of language performance, no matter what the characteristics or causes of the deviation might be. In this study, errors refer to deviations of plural-noun pattern in a sentence made by the respective students. Thus, there is no distinction between the terms

"errors" and "mistakes"

1.7.2. Agreement of English Plural-Nouns in a Sentence

Roloff and Brosseit defined a noun that names more than one person or thing ¹⁹ is plural in number. In this study, what the writer means by "plural-nouns" are ones which consist of Regular Plural-Nouns (e.g. books, keys and tomatoes) and Irregular Plural-Nouns (e.g. men, pyjamas, family, Electronics, women-servants and sisters-in-law).

Since the agreement of English plural-nouns in a sentence dealt with the agreement between determiners and plural-nouns and the agreement between plural-nouns and verbs, the writer used Harry Shaw's definition. He defined "agreement" as "correspondence in person, number, gender, or ²⁰ case". Thus, when a determiner agrees with its noun, both determiner and the noun have the same number (singular and plural). Adjectives (in this case, determiners) are used with singular and plural, masculine and feminine

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Ernawati, Errors in WH-Questions Made by the Second Year Students of SMPK Santo Yosef Surabaya, Unpublished S1 Paper, Surabaya, Universitas Katolik Widya Mandala, 1988, p.10.

19

Roloff & Brosseit, "The Parts of Speech": Sentences, Glencoe Publishing Co., Inc., 1979, p.16.

20

Harry Shaw, Errors in English and Ways to Correct Them, New York, Harpen & Row, Publishers, 1986, p.231.

²¹
 nouns . And when a subject agrees with its verb, both the subject and the verb have the same person (first, second, third) and number (singular or plural) ²² . So the term "agreement" is used both in the agreement of determiners and plural-nouns and in the agreement between plural-nouns and verbs.

considering the limitation of this study, in this thesis, the writer used the term "agreement" to refer to "correspondence between determiners and plural-nouns and correspondence between plural-noun subjects and their verbs in number (plural) in a sentence".

1.8. The Limitation of the study-

This thesis simply dealt with the students' errors in the agreement of plural-noun pattern in a sentence. What the writer means by "plural-nouns" are ones which consist of Regular Plural-Nouns (e.g. books, keys and tomatoes) and Irregular Plural-Nouns (e.g. men, pyjamas, family, Electronics, women-servants and sisters-in-law). Plural-nouns were limited as subjects of an affirmative sentence. The modifiers used in the agreement of plural-noun pattern in a sentence were limited to determiners: articles (e.g. -----

²¹ .
 A.J. Thomson and A.V. Martinet, A Practical English Grammar, Oxford University Press, 1980, p.15.

²²
 Harry Shaw, op.cit., p.231.

the, a and an), demonstrative adjectives (e.g. this, that, these, those) and adjectives of indefinitive quantity (e.g. many, some, few, several, all, much and little). The verbs used in the agreement of plural-noun pattern in a sentence were limited to full-verbs and to be-verbs. The tense used in the agreement of plural-noun pattern in a sentence were limited to Simple Present. The following examples in the agreement of plural-noun pattern in sentences are:

- These dresses are worn-out.
- 'This news is good.
- Measles is a contagious disease.
- All my brothers-in-law are clever.
- The Brussels is a nice city.
- A few teaspoons of coffee are provided.
- Too much sugar in tea is bad for you.
- Electronics is a field of study.
- The committee never make up their minds in a hurry.
- Many machinery are out of order.
- The poor is often hungry.

The subject of this study was limited to the third year student of SMA Kristen Pirngadi Surabaya. There were four classes, they are : IIIA1, IIIA2, IIIA3.1, and IIIA3.2. Class IIIA1 and class IIIA2 were chosen as try-out groups and class IIIA3.1 and class IIIA3.2 as the samples of this study.

1.9. Organization of the Thesis

There are five chapters presented in this study. Chapter I deals with the background, the problem, the objective of this study and the **significance**, the assumptions, the theoretical framework, the definition of the key terms, the limitation and the organization of this study. Chapter II presents the review of related literature. Chapter III deals with the methodology of the study which consists of the nature of this study, the population and samples for this study, the instruments of this study, the procedures of collecting data. Chapter IV deals with the data analysis and findings, the occurrence frequency of errors and the interpretation of the findings. Chapter V is the conclusion which **discusses** the results of this study and some suggestions for further study.