

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter elaborates the background of the study concerning the teachers' strategies in teaching grammar, statements of the problems, the objectives of the study, the significances of the study, the scope of the study, method of the study (which covers method in collecting data, and in analyzing the data), definition of key terms, and organization of the paper.

1.1 Background of the Study

English is one of the foreign languages which are taught in Indonesia. It has become more important than any other foreign languages to learn by Indonesian as stated by Lauder (2008:10) that "it is widely recognized that English is important for Indonesia and the reason most frequently put forward for this it is that English is a global or international language". That is why English is studied by the students of elementary school, junior high school, senior high school, and university who are expected to master English in order to be able to respond to the globalization era which needs the people to be able to communicate by using English as an international language (Brewster & Ellis, 2003:1; Listia & Kamal, 2008). It is in line with what Zein (2008) explains that "many Asian countries believe that introducing English to primary students is considerably important to ensure their success". Huda (1994, cited in Lestari, 2003:199) mentions several reasons why English should be introduced at primary schools, they are:

"(1) Adolescent children in diverse regions in Indonesia need to speak English for the demands of tourism industries; (2) Some educators believe that the earlier a child learns a foreign language, the better her/his opportunity in acquiring a high proficiency in the target language;

- (3) The longer the individual learns a language, the higher the proficiency she/he will achieve; and (4) The results of the current English instruction at the secondary level is unsatisfactory”.

Because English is important to learn as early as possible, the government decides a policy that “elementary school can add subjects (including English subject) in the curriculum, but the lessons should be in accordance with national education goals” (Listia & Kamal, 2008). The government continues that “schools have the authority on English subjects included as one of the local content (*muatan lokal*) being taught in primary schools based on the considerations and the needs of the situation and conditions from both parents and society itself” (Listia & Kamal, 2008).

Some children found many difficulties while learning a foreign language, especially grammar. Novianto (2009:ii) states that one of the obstacles that the students face in learning English is Grammar lessons, because it is difficult and boring. Besides, the other reasons why children have difficulties in learning English, especially grammar, are “children learn more slowly and forget things quickly, get bored easily, may not be motivated to learn if they are not interested” (Brewster & Ellis, 2003:27).

Discussions on grammar teaching have focused on approaches and practices that will be explained further in Chapter 2. There are three kinds of approaches in teaching grammar in general; they are teaching grammar from rules (deductive approach), teaching grammar from examples (inductive approach), and teaching grammar through text (Thornbury, 1999:29,49,69).

The deductive approach is when the students learn grammar rules, and then they use it. “In deductive approach, learners are given a rule/generalizations by the teacher or text book and then allowed to practice various instances of language to which the rule applies” (Brown, 2001:365). However, focus-on-form tasks called deductive approach was mostly used by the teachers, who taught at university in Turkey, as respondents of the research conducted by Phipps and Borg (2009:383). Besides, there

was a positive attitude of the young learners toward the focus-on-form tasks in Brunei Darussalam. They seemed to enjoy learning the lesson and also felt easier in understanding the lesson and they were able to do the other focus-on-form tasks (deductive approach) as the result of the research conducted by Shak and Gardner (2008:387).

The inductive approach is when the students use the grammar rules, and then they learn it. “In inductive approach, various language forms are practiced but the learners are left to discover or induce rules and generalizations on their own” (Brown, 2001:365). Inductive approach successfully worked to teach grammar to ten undergraduate international students from Russia, Ukraine, Taiwan, and China, whose TOEFL scores were lower than 500 points (Sysoyev, 1999). Besides, inductive approach played a positive role in improving students’ academic English achievement both at elementary and secondary schools in Pakistan. They had positive attitude toward the inductive method (Bibi, 2002:95).

Teaching grammar through text is when the students are given the text then the grammatical aspects used in the text are explained (Thornbury, 1999:69). He continues that the teacher can find the sources of the text from the coursebook, authentic source (such as newspapers, songs, short stories, etc), the teacher, and the students themselves.

Based on the elaboration above, it shows that most of the research on grammar teaching is about teaching grammar to older learners. Thus, being inspired by those research, this study is conducted, which aims at finding the teachers’ strategies in teaching grammar to young learners. The strategies include how the teachers implement the grammar teaching strategies, how the teachers assess or evaluate the students’ learning, the obstacles faced by the teachers in teaching grammar to young learners, and the solutions given by the teachers to overcome the problems.

1.2 Statements of the Problems

The research questions of the study focus on the following questions:

- a. What strategies are used by English teachers in teaching grammar to young learners?
- b. What obstacles do the teachers experience in the process of teaching grammar to young learners?
- c. What solutions are given by the teachers to overcome the problems?

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are to find out the teaching strategies used by the teachers in teaching grammar to young learners which include implementing the grammar teaching strategies, and assessing the students' learning, to find out the obstacles that the teachers experienced in teaching English to young learners, and to get the solution given by the teachers to overcome the problems.

1.4 The Significance of the Study

This study is aimed at finding out:

- a. The teaching strategies used by the teachers in teaching grammar to young learners.
- b. The activities done by the teachers and the students in the classroom in the process of teaching and learning grammar.
- c. The obstacles experienced by the teachers and the way how they solve the problems in teaching grammar to young learners.

1.5 Scope of the Study

Based on the purpose of the study, this research will focus on:

- a. Describing the strategies used by the teachers in teaching grammar to young learners,
- b. Describing the obstacles that the teachers experienced in teaching grammar to young learners,
- c. Describing the way how the teachers solve the problem.

1.6 Method of the Study

This section briefly outlines the methods of the study. Detailed discussion on this matter will be explained in Chapter 3. The purposes of the study are to find out the teaching strategies used by the teachers in teaching grammar to young learners. Therefore, it employs the descriptive method.

Data are collected by observing the activities in the classroom and interviewing the teachers. Observation focuses on the strategies used by the teachers in teaching grammar to young learners, and the activities the teachers and students do in teaching-learning grammar. The conversation appeared in teaching and learning grammar is recorded. Besides, this observation aims at finding how the teachers assess the students' achievement to see the learning outcomes of learning grammar. The interview consists of several questions related to the teaching strategies, obstacles which occur in the process of teaching, and the solution given by the teachers in solving the problem.

Data are analyzed by using several methods. The data collected from the classroom observation are transcribed, documented into observation sheets, classified, and interpreted. The data collected from the interview are transcribed, classified, and interpreted.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

In order to give a clear view on this study, the definitions of key terms are provided as follows:

- a. “Strategies is procedures used in learning, thinking, etc. which serve as a way of reaching a goal” (Richards, Platt and Platt, 1992:355).
- b. Grammar refers to one of language components, consists of pattern and rules of language that should be learned if we want to be able to speak English correctly (Suyanto, 2007:43).
- c. ‘Young learners’ refer to children from five to eleven years of age (Phillips, 1993:3).

1.8 Organization of the Paper

The paper is organized into five chapters. First, Chapter I is Introduction which contains the background of the study concerning the teachers’ strategies in teaching grammar, statements of the problems, the objectives of the study, the significances of the study, limitation of the study, method of the study, definition of key terms, and organization of the paper. The next chapter is Theoretical Background which contains several theories as basis of the research. The third chapter is Research Methodology which consists of methodology of the research, the research design, the instrument, population and sample, technique in collecting data, and technique in analyzing data. Then, the fourth chapter is Result and Discussion which reports the research finding. The last chapter is Conclusion and Recommendation which consists of the conclusion, and the suggestions of the study.