

Chapter One

Introduction

In this chapter there are several parts presented. This chapter discusses the background of the research and identification of the problems. It also provides the study's delimitation, which gives a focus for discussion. Besides, this chapter also presents research questions and objectives of the research. The significances of the research followed by the organization of the chapters are also presented in this chapter.

Background of the Study

Grammar is the study of words and the relationships between them; it is an unobservable force that directs to the sentence construction. Anyone who uses a particular language for communication becomes conscious or unconscious of the grammar of that language. In learning English, students should learn four skills namely writing, listening, speaking, and reading. In learning these four skills, good grammar mastery is needed to be able to master English well. Marzulina (2019) stated that English grammar is important since it is one of the language components that should be mastered. Moreover, grammar is beneficial for English learners because when grammatical errors or misunderstandings occur in any of speaking, writing, listening, or reading skills the communication may be disrupted (Savage, Bitterlin, & Price, 2010).

Understanding linguistic structures is essential for learning a foreign language for the accurate English. Nelson and Greenbaum (2018) argued that grammar mediates between the system of sounds or written symbols on the one hand and the system of meaning on the other. According to Close (1982) as

cited in Almuhammadi (2020), “English grammar is chiefly a system of syntax that decides the order and patterns in which words are arranged in sentences” (p.13). Further, he stated that basic labels of learning grammar included the label of pronoun, noun, verb, adjective, conjunction, adverb, determiner, and preposition.

That way students must be able to master and follow the rules of grammar in using English properly. However, in teachers’ experiences and observation in their classrooms, students still faced problems in learning grammar. There are still many problems and issues in learning grammar in the classrooms. This is due to the fact that grammar acquisition is linked to cognitive abilities (Uibu Liiver, 2015). Some students can speak English, but they are unsure how to arrange the words they want to say in accordance with grammar rules. The next issue is that students frequently struggle to form sentences with correct tenses. When they use the incorrect tenses, the sentence becomes incorrect. Not only that, but Indonesian students are also unsure of the differences between Indonesian and English sentence structures; they occasionally create English sentences using Indonesian sentence structure (Ameliani, 2019).

Research related to problems in learning and teaching grammar has been done by some researchers. For the example, a study conducted by Uibu and Liiver (2015) discussed the effective strategies in teaching grammar. The study showed that native language teachers must be able to recognize the causes of various grammatical errors and implement appropriate practices and techniques to help to reduce and prevent them. The study showed that teachers who fit the inductive description listed the widest range of tactics they employ.

Teachers who preferred deductive teaching mentioned only illustrating. The researchers stated that it is important for the teachers to choose strategies that focus more on the development of higher cognitive skills such as synthesizing and evaluation.

Another study was done by Komara and Tiarsiwi (2021) entitled Exploring Indonesian EFL Learners' Perception of English Learning Grammar. The purpose of this study is to determine whether and how grammar is perceived as having a bad reputation, as well as to investigate their competence or motivation. The study shows that it was clearly found that most of Indonesian EFL learners positively agree that grammar was difficult but crucial to learn and master. The study also shows that the learners' perception of learning grammar was negative by stating many obstacles in learning grammar. For instance, learners experienced problem with unclear grammar teaching instruction and explanation from the teacher, problem of monotonous grammar teaching models from the teacher, and problem with the English school textbooks. It is also to determine what difficulties students face while studying grammar, and which learning models do students like to use when learning grammar.

The next study was done by Kaçani and Mangelli (2013) entitled Albanian Teachers' Perceptions on difficulties in teaching and learning grammar of EFL. The goal of the study is to seek the difficulties in learning grammar EFL students. Kaçani and Mangelli (2013) stated that such awareness may help the teacher in choosing the right teaching option that would pose fewer difficulties and problems to their learners and therefore, enhance students' learning of English grammar.

The results of this study indicated that in teachers' perceptions, both

teachers and learners faced difficulties. The teachers perceived that their learners have difficulties in the process of transferring the knowledge about grammar (declarative knowledge) into ability to use that knowledge in real life communication (procedural knowledge). It is also perceived that learners found the difficulty in using the terms, and difficulties from finding form-function matches that include vocabulary and varieties of structure.

From the studies mentioned above, the first research focuses on investigating the effective strategies in teaching grammar. The second research shows that it was clearly found that most of Indonesian EFL learners positively agree that grammar was difficult but crucial to learn and master. The third research focuses on the teachers' perception in teaching and learning grammar on the Albanian students. The results of this study indicated that in teachers' perceptions, both teachers and learners faced difficulties. Therefore, the researcher is interested in investigating the problems that students face in learning grammar based on the teachers' perception. The researcher also intended to know the effective strategies in teaching grammar that teachers use in teaching grammar at a Senior High School in Yogyakarta.

Identification of the Problem

Teaching and learning grammar at schools usually raises problems. The problems which are related to learning grammar in Senior high schools can be external and internal factors. The internal factors can be from the students themselves such as their motivation, interest, intelligence, or readiness. The external factors can be from environment, family, or teaching strategies from the teacher. In addition, the factors from the language itself such as the label of each part of speech, phrases, clauses, and the concept of tenses in English may

also be potential to contribute the problems. The students have difficulties using rules of grammar when they practice writing or speaking. Sometimes students forget or misplace a verb or do not put a verb in a sentence and sometimes the students do not put the conjunction correctly.

In studying grammar, students can not only memorize the formulas in the grammar, but also must understand and practice it, so that later students will get used to using the rules of the grammar properly. Effective teaching strategies can help the students avoid mistakes in studying grammar. Good teaching strategies can motivate students to study grammar. The students become interested in grammar when they understand the rules of grammar by the effective teaching strategies.

Delimitation of the Problem

In this part the researcher focuses on investigating the problems that students have in learning grammar and the effective strategies the teachers apply in teaching grammar at senior high schools in Yogyakarta. The students' problems in this research refer to the factors that make students feel difficult in learning grammar. The strategies refer to the teachers' general strategies in teaching grammar and not specifically aims to address specific students' problems. The research was based on the teachers' perceptions. This research took place at two senior high schools in Yogyakarta. The participants of this research were limited to the English teachers in senior high school. The research only applied qualitative approach using interview to collect the data.

Research Question

Based on the background above, the researcher formulates two research question:

1. What are the students' problems in learning grammar perceived by the teachers?
2. What the effective strategies in teaching grammar perceived by the teachers?

The Objectives of the Research

Based on the research questions above, this research has purposes as follow:

1. To find out the students' problems in learning grammar based on the teachers' perspectives.
2. To find out the effective strategies are used by the teachers in teaching grammar.

The Significance of the Research

The research carried out is expected to provide several benefits for students, teachers, and other researchers.

The teachers. The results of this study are expected to be beneficial for the teachers to understand more about students' problems based in learning grammar based on the teachers' perceptions. The teachers also can get information on strategies in teaching grammar applied by other teachers. Moreover, the information in this research can be used to evaluate the teachers in teaching grammar.

The students. The results of this study are expected to be beneficial for the students to gain information of their problems in learning grammar perceived by the teachers. Therefore, they can discuss and share further about their own problems to their teachers, so that the teachers can help them through the effective teaching strategies.

Other researchers. This research may be interesting to other

researchers to conduct similar research. The results of this study provide information regarding various problems that students have in learning grammar as well as teachers' strategies in teaching grammar. Therefore, other researchers can use the findings as theoretical overview and references related to the same area of this research.

Organization of the Chapters

This research consists of five chapters. The first chapter is an introduction. This chapter describes the research background, identification of the problems, delimitation of the problem, research questions, research objectives, research significance, and the last is organization of the chapters. The second chapter is a literature review. This chapter provides some theories which support the overview of problems in learning grammar based on teacher perception. The third chapter is the methodology which describes how the research was carried out by the researcher. In this chapter, the researcher explains the method, participants, instruments used, data collection technique, and data analysis.

Chapter four includes findings and discussion. This chapter presents the results of the data analysis. The findings are related to the students' problems in learning grammar perceived by the teachers. The findings also reveal the effective strategies in teaching grammar. Chapter five contains conclusions and recommendations. This chapter provides a summary of the research. In addition, it also provides recommendations from the researcher. Teachers, students, and other researchers are given recommendations.