

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of Study

One of the English language components that influence the students in mastering of four language skills is grammar. Most of the people argue that the basis of language lies on grammar. When people talked about the language skill or the tendency of standard in English, they all generally refer to their individual ability in grammar. According to Komara and Ramdani (2015: 1), grammar is important component in learning English in order to gain competency in using English. It means that grammar is essential in learning English which enhances the competency to use the language itself.

As grammar applied in all language skill, grammar holds an important role in foreign language learning. Developing communicative competence is prior to grammatical competence, although both of them are equally important. A student cannot be fluent or be taken seriously in a language without learning the appropriate grammar rules of the language they are trying to gain. It seems like today's phenomenon that students need grammatical competence to gain their communicative competence because in some cases students who master grammar are still difficult to produce effective communication.

Grammar as an essential aspect of communication aims to create an effective communication. Students need grammar skills, because without grammar, speech will be meaningless. Students should study grammar because

grammar skills will help them to organize words and messages and make them meaningful. A good knowledge of grammar helps students to make sentences clear enough to understand. Language acquisition without grammar will be confusing and people now agree that grammar is too important to be ignored, and that without a good knowledge of grammar, learners' language development will be severely constrained, Mart (2013: 125).

Eventually problems appear when people learn something, so does learning grammar. Students consider grammar as their problem in learning English because grammar follows concrete rules, and students consider it as the hard thing to learn. It also happens when the students of English Department of university in Indonesia get grammar subject. As Huegli (2008: 1) argued that grammar is the system of rules by which we form words and sentence, grammar should be learned by students who study English because grammar is important for their skill of reading, writing and speaking. In English Department of Indonesian University curriculum generally grammar is taught from the first until the forth semester, the reason is that grammar have the role as the key of English and will guide students to master their language skill.

For years, the difficulties on learning English grammar become the big issue for English Department students especially in Muhammadiyah University of Ponorogo because the students come from different backgrounds with different ability and competence, so their capacities in receiving English grammar are also different. Not all of students can receive English grammar subject well even many students who have learned English grammar consciously learn the structure of

English for the first time when studying English as foreign language. The fact shows that students can remember the rules of grammar well but they cannot apply it to construct sentences, it causes them difficult in arranging or writing paragraph and text, then finally they get some troubles in writing thesis as their final project.

Difficulties of learning can be solved by learning strategies. Learning strategies is a person's approach to learn and use information. Learning strategies are used by students to help them understand information and solve problems. As O'Malley and Chamot (1990: 1) said that learning strategies are special ways of processing information that enhance comprehension, learning, or retention of the information. Oxford (1990: 1) also supported their argument by stated that learning strategies are steps taken by students to enhance their own learning. Strategies are especially important for language learning because they are tools for active, self-directed improvement, which is essential for developing communicative competence. Students who learn English and find some difficulties should have learning strategies to make them more active and improve their competence, because the fact shows that students who do not know or use good learning strategies often learn passively and ultimately fail in their subject even in school.

The researcher finds that learning strategies has a lot of functions to help students understand information and solve their problem. Actually all students certainly have their own learning strategies when they learn English grammar,

although it is unconsciously. The researcher is curious, what learning strategies used by English Department students to comprehend English grammar.

Based on the explanation above the researcher would like to find out the students' problems in learning English grammar. Besides, the researcher also would like to find out the students learning strategies in learning English grammar, especially for 4th semester students of English Department of Muhammadiyah University of Ponorogo. Therefore, in this study the writer is intended to conduct a qualitative research entitles "English Grammar Learning Strategies of 4th Semester Students of English Department Muhammadiyah University of Ponorogo."

1.2. Statements of The Problem

Based on the background of the study in the previous part, in this research the researcher states the problems as follows :

- 1) What are the 4th semester students of English Department's problems in learning English grammar?
- 2) What are the strategies used by the 4th semester students of English Department in learning English grammar?

1.3. Purposes of Study

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

- 1) To find out the 4th semester students of English Department's problems in learning English grammar.

- 2) To find out the strategies of the 4th semester students of English Department in learning English grammar.

1.4. The Importance of This Study

The result of this research is expected to be useful to :

- 1) Researcher

As a student of English Department, this result of the research can be reference for the researcher to choose the appropriate material and strategies on teaching grammar for her students when she teach in the future.

- 2) English Lecturers

The result of this research shows English grammar learning strategies that should be used to teach English grammar subject.

- 3) English Department Students

This research gives information to them about the important of using learning strategies when they have to learn English grammar.

1.5. Scope and Limitation

Based on the purposes of the study above the researcher determines :

- 1) The scope of this research is learning of English grammar.
- 2) The limitation of this research is English grammar learning strategies used by 4th semester students of English Department of Muhammadiyah University of Ponorogo.

1.6. Definition of Key Term

Grammar : the system of rules by which we form words and sentence (Huegli, 2008: 1).

Learning Strategies : the special ways of processing information that enhance comprehension, learning, or retention of the information (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990: 1).