

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Research

According to Tompkins and Hoskisson (1991:497) “grammar is the description of the structure of a language. It involves principles of word and sentence formation. In contrast, usage is “correctness” or using the appropriate word in a sentence –the socially preferred way of using within a dialect”.

Grammar actually guides us to write and to speak well. So, it is very important to teach grammar. In other words, grammar is a system of rules governing the conventional arrangement and relationship of words in a sentence (Brown, 1994:347. It also helps us to comprehend written or oral English form.

Elbow (1973) and Haley-James (1981) view “grammar as a tool for writers and it is recommended combine grammar instruction with revising and editing stages of writing process”. It means that grammar is essential to be known and understood because of its usage.

Linguistics views that, “grammar as logical and structural rules that govern the composition of sentences, phrases, and words in any given natural language. It refers also to the study of such rules, and this field includes morphology and syntax, often complemented by phonetics, phonology, semantics, and pragmatics” (cited from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia). In line with this, grammar in English cannot be ignored, it can arrange our thought expression fluently. So, the product is the good correct utterance that can be understood clearly by the listeners and the readers.

In teaching English subject, it is a must that English teacher knows and masters four language skills: listening, speaking reading and writing (Tompkins and Hoskisson, 1991:23) when he or she teaches English. Students will receive material better if the teacher delivers it well.

The goal of grammar instruction is to enable students to carry out their communication purposes (cited from [http:// www.nclrc. org/ essentials / grammar / goals gram. htm](http://www.nclrc.org/essentials/grammar/goalsgram.htm)). In line with this, in [http:// www.nclrc. org/ essentials/ grammar/ goalsgram.htm](http://www.nclrc.org/essentials/grammar/goalsgram.htm) tells that, “there are three implications of the goal of grammar instruction: 1) students need overt instruction that connects grammar points with larger communication contexts; 2) students do not need to master every aspect of each grammar point, only those that are relevant to the immediate communication task; and 3) error correction is not always the instructor's first responsibility”.

There are some criteria of teaching grammar. Brown (1994: 349) states that, “some criteria technique of teaching grammar, such as: a) are embedded in meaningful, communicative contexts; b) contribute positively to communicative goals; c) promote accuracy within fluent, communicative language; d) do not overwhelm students with linguistic terminology; e) are as lively and intrinsically motivating as possible”.

Grammar is also considered as the most difficult aspects of language to teach well (cited from [http:// www. nclrc. org/ essentials/ grammar/ grindex.htm](http://www.nclrc.org/essentials/grammar/grindex.htm)). The writer focuses on teaching grammar skill as his research, and more focus on simple past tense and irregular verb which is the part of grammar which is a

crucial problem for students. In addition, the writer observes the correlation between them, because:

- 1) The large scope of the grammar material which is impossible if it is observed one by one in detail in this paper.
- 2) The object of the researcher is at the SMP level, it is in the SMP Pasundan Rancaekek.
- 3) The limitation of the time that researcher owning.
- 4) Brown's statement (1994: 350), he states "if too much grammar focus is forced on to beginning level learners, the teacher runs the risk of blocking the acquisition of fluency skills".

Tense is one of the important grammar elements. There are twelve tenses that should be mastered by students, those are: 1) the simple present, 2) the simple past, 3) the simple future, 4) the present progressive, 5) the past progressive, 6) the future progressive, 7) the present perfect, 8) the past perfect, 9) the future perfect, 10) the present perfect progressive, 11) the past perfect progressive, and the last is 12) the future perfect progressive. Talking tenses, it hugely relates to verb, regular verb, and irregular verb.

In this paper, the writer focuses on simple past tense and irregular verb as his research. It is based on the fact that teacher finds difficulties when teaching grammar in the classroom. The problems are 1) it is difficult for students to use simple past tense correctly in a sentence. Sometimes he or she writes "*I go to school yesterday,*" the correct sentence is "*I went to school yesterday.*" 2) it is difficult for students to use irregular verb in writing a simple past tense sentence.

Sometimes he or she writes “*I speaked English in my classroom,*” the correct sentence is “*I spoke English in my classroom.*” In this sentence, it is clear that students are difficult to use irregular verb in simple past tense sentences.

Moreover, full verb has four morphological forms; (1) base form, (2) *-s* form, (3) *-ing* participle, (4) *-ed* form (Greenbaum, 1990: 25). Whereas, according to Wishon and Burks (1980: 192) “there are five forms in English verb; (1) simple form (infinitive), (2) third person singular, (3) present participle, (4) past tense, (5) past participle. The verb *work* is an example the regular verb. Regular verb forms the past and past participle by simply adding *-e* or *-ed* to the infinitive, or the simple form. Consequently, the verb *speak, sing, dig, cut* are different from the verb *work* for they are irregular verb and *work* is the regular verb”.

In many irregular verbs, for example *speak* represents the comparatively a few verb whose past tense and past participle forms are different (Wishon and Burks, 1980: 192) and there are two *-ed* forms with distinct syntactic function; the past *-ed* form and the *-ed* participle (Greenbaum, 1990: 125). For more detail, in this table below is the different between regular verb and irregular verb:

Table 1

Regular verb

Base Form	3 rd Person Singular	Present Participle	Past Tense	Past Participle
Work	works	Working	worked	worked

Table 2

Irregular verb

Base Form	3 rd Person Singular	Present Participle	Past Tense	Past Participle
Speak	speaks	Speaking	spoke	spoken
Sing	sings	Singing	sang	sung
Dig	digs	Digging	Dug	dug
Cut	cuts	Cutting	Cut	cut

From table above, it can be seen that regular verb has four forms, like *work*. Another irregular verb varies in this respect, part of the irregular verbs has five forms, like *speak* and *sing*, part of the other have four and or three forms, like *dig* and *cut*.

Based on the explanation above, the writer takes this research by the title **“THE PORTRAIT OF TEACHING GRAMMAR AT GRADE EIGHT OF THE SMP PASUNDAN RANCAEKEK-BANDUNG.”**

B. Statements of the Research Problem

Based on background of study above, the writer formulates the problems as follows:

1. How does the process of teaching irregular verb influences to students' mastery of simple past tense at grade eight of the SMP Pasundan Rancaekek-Bandung?
2. What are students' responses to the teacher on the process of teaching irregular verb and simple past tense in the classroom?
3. How high is students' achievement in simple past tense?

C. Purpose and Significance of Research

Purpose of Research

1. To know the process of teaching irregular verb influences to students' mastery of simple past tense at grade eight of the SMP Pasundan Rancaekek-Bandung.
2. To know students' responses to the teacher, on the process of teaching irregular verb and simple past tense in the classroom
3. To know how high is students' achievement in simple past tense.

Significance of Research

1. Theoretically, this study is essential to discuss and to find out the appropriate English teaching grammar that is used by English teachers in grade eight at the SMP Pasundan Rancaekek-Bandung.
2. Practically, researcher studies the way to develop the English teaching grammar and to know students' achievement in learning English grammar. In conclusion, first, researcher expects that the result of this study can be made as reference for the other researcher. Secondly, researcher expects that the result of this study can be made as reference for teaching English grammar in the class.

D. Rationale

Grammar is central to the teaching and learning of language. It is also one of the most difficult aspects of language to teach well ([http:// www. nclrc.org/essentials/ grammar/ grindex. htm](http://www.nclrc.org/essentials/grammar/grindex.htm)). Related to this, Brown (1994:347) states,

“grammar and vocabulary are central of foreign language teaching”. It means in teaching them need hard work.

Brown (1994: 349) states that, “criteria of techniques of teaching grammar are: a) are embedded in meaningful, communicative contexts, b) contribute positively to communicative goals, c) promote accuracy within fluent, communicative language, d) do not overwhelm students with linguistic terminology, e) are as lively and intrinsically motivating as possible”.

Moreover, one urgent aspect of grammar is tense. Greenbaum (1990: 47) says, “tense is a grammatical category that is realized by verb inflection”. Moreover, tense is needed obviously to construct the structure of language grammar. For example, a sentence needs having either verb phrase or tense. Tense is the time relates to the action that occurs. Tense is characteristic of verb that indicates the time of action or state of being that a verb expresses also, an analytic category based on this characteristic (Webster Dictionary, 1996:1379).

Thompson (1995: 10) states that, “there are sixteen types of tenses”. In line with this, tense is divided into two categories; present tense and past tense (Greenbaum, 1990: 48). But, in this paper, the simple past tense which is issued more. The past tense is used to talk about the past (cited from English on Sky Book 1, 2004: 127). Azar (1989: 24) in his book Understanding and Using English Grammar states, “the simple past indicates that an activity or situation began and ended at a particular time in the past”. Discussing about the past tense, of course, it consists of two main verbs in its sentences, those are:

1) Regular verb

Regular verb can be constructed by adding –ed to the basic word, regular verb in English forms its past tense and past participle by adding –d/ed to the present infinitive or simple form, which is often called the plain form, the list is in the table below;

Table 3
Sample of Regular Verb

Simple Form	Simple Past	Past Participle Form
Hope	Hoped	Hoped
Stop	Stopped	Stopped
Listen	Listened	Listened

(Azar, 1989: 17)

And here are spelling rules for regular verbs:

Table 4
The Rules of Regular Verb

Most regular verbs: add –ed	work > worked help > helped start > started	bekerja menolong memulai
Verbs ending in –e: add –d	hope > hoped like > liked decide > decided	berharap suka memutuskan
Short verbs ending in consonant+vowel+consonant: double consonant and add –ed	stop > stopped plan > planned regret > regretted	berhenti merencanakan menyesali
Verbs ending in consonant+ y: change y to I and add –ed	cry > cried study > studied hurry > hurried	menangis belajar bergegas

1) Irregular verb

Irregular verb cannot be added –ed to the basic words. It varies in the form, so, the past form of these verbs should be remembered. For more detail, it can be seen in this table:

Table 5

Sample of Irregular Verb

Simple Form	Past Form	Past Participle Form
Break	broke	Broken
Come	came	Come
Find	found	Found

(Azar, 1989: 17)

Irregular verb varies in the past tense sentence form. It always becomes frustrating thing for the students, especially for the grade eight junior high school levels. Sometimes, the instructors or the teachers are made hugely confusing by this, how to teach students in well, in order they can master it in neat and better. In short, based on the explanation above, the writer takes this research, the portrait of teaching grammar which is done by the English teacher at the SMP Pasundan Rancaekek-Bandung.

E. Methodology

1. Data Source

The writer uses two kinds of data: primary data and secondary data. Related to this, Lafland and Lofland which is quoted by Moleong (2002:112) states that, “primary data envelops words and action from people who is interviewed that noted through written note or video record. Secondary data which is in the form of document, archives, book, magazine, or reference that relate to teaching grammar”.

2. The Method and the Techniques of collecting data

a. Method of research

This research uses descriptive method. Leedy (1989: 140) called, “the descriptive survey as the method of research that looks intensely to recent phenomena”. In line with this, Seliger and Shohamy (1989: 124) state that, “descriptive method is used to establish the existence of phenomena by describing them explicitly, delineate or describe naturally occurring phenomena without experimental manipulation”. Surakhmad (1985: 138) adds, “*penyelidikan deskriptif tertuju pada pemecahan masalah yang ada pada jaman sekarang*”. Moreover, the writer uses descriptive method as his research method to find out the portrait of teaching grammar at grade eight of the SMP Pasundan Rancaekek-Bandung.

b. Techniques of collecting data

In this paper, the writer uses some techniques of collecting data to get information by observation and interviewing;

- 1) The principal of the SMP Pasundan Rancaekek.
- 2) Some students at the SMP Pasundan Rancaekek who are the receivers of grammar material.
- 3) The teacher who teaches at the SMP Pasundan Rancaekek.

Furthermore, the writer delivers questionnaires to some learners. It is to know their achievement in learning English grammar in the process of teaching learning in their classroom.

a. Observation

Observation usually focuses more on the collection of data specified in advance before the research beginning (Seliger and Shohamy, 1989: 127). Soeratno and Arsyad (1993: 89) state that, “observation technique is supervision and recording systematically about phenomena that are researched”. Moreover, in collecting data, the writer uses observation technique. It is used to know the total number of students, to know the location of research, the condition of school figure, the facilities of education, etc. In line with this, Arikunto (2002:156) states that, “observation includes the activity of attention placing toward an object using all of sense appliance”. In other word, observation could be carried out through eyesight, sense of smell, hearing, touching and sense of taste.

In short, the writer focuses on observing;

- 1) The process of teaching grammar at grade eight of the SMP Pasundan Rancaekek by their teacher (this is related to English teacher).
- 2) The students’ responses to their teacher on the process of teaching grammar (this is related to students).
- 3) The principal of the SMP Pasundan Rancaekek.

b. Interview

Soeratno and Arsyad (1993: 92) state that, “interview is a process of interaction between the interviewers with the respondent”. Moleong (2005: 186) adds, “*wawancara adalah percakapan dengan maksud tertentu yang dilakukan oleh dua pihak, yaitu pewawancara (interviewer) yang mengajukan pertanyaan dan terwawancara (interviewee) yang memberi jawaban atas pertanyaan itu*”.

Moreover, interview is done to get some information from the object researcher, which consists of questions and responses.

In this research, the interview is pointed out to;

- 1) The principal of the SMP Pasundan Rancaekek.
- 2) Some students at the SMP Pasundan Rancaekek who are the receivers of grammar materials.
- 3) The teacher who teaches at the SMP Pasundan Rancaekek.

c. Test

Test is used in various way either in formal language test or test like activities (Seliger and Shohamy, 1989: 126). Test defines a series of questions, problems, or practical tasks to gauge somebody's knowledge, ability or experience (cited from Encarta 2008). In this research, test is given to students to measure their achievement in grammar ability.

d. Analyzing Data

To analyze data the writer will use these several step:

- a. Collecting and studying all available data from various source, such as observation and interview which have been written down in a note, archives and others before.
- b. Categorizing data is grouping data which have been gathered in parts of which are clearly interconnected on the basis of intuition, and opinion (Moleong, 1992: 193).

c. Determining validity by using following step:

- 1) Extending in participating by observing and participating in English teaching grammar process at SMP Pasundan Rancaekek.
- 2) Observing teaching grammar which is done by teacher at SMP Pasundan Rancaekek.
- 3) Triangulating: conducted to observe the original data via other source by comparing the result of observation data with interview data and comparing interview data with documents that correspond.
- 4) Checking elements and data, also interpreting and summarizing research.

