

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the general issues related to the present study. These include the background of the study, research question, purposes of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation of the study and definition of the key terms.

#### A. RESEARCH BACKGROUND

In learning English, there are two aspects that must be mastered by students: namely language performance and language competence.<sup>1</sup> Language performance called language skills include listening, speaking, reading and writing. While language competence is underlying knowledge of system of language, they include grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. Both of the language performance and language competence are important in learning English. One of the language performances is grammar. Grammar is one of aspect that must be mastered by students in learning English. According to Richards, Platt and Weber in Nunan , grammar is a description of a language and the way in which units such as words and phrases are combined to produce sentence in the language<sup>2</sup>. English grammar is a science that teaches about manner to speaks, read and write and make with composed English sentence truly.<sup>3</sup> Thus grammar explains how the language should be structures by using various categories. Harmed also had pointed out that:<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ilyatul Umroh, Deegre of Strata: *"Improving Students' Understanding of Simple Past Tense by Using Folktales"*. (Jakarta: Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University , 2011)

<sup>2</sup> David Nunan, *Practical English Language Teaching: Grammar* (New York: McGraw-Hill Companies, 2005), 2.

<sup>3</sup> Scott Thornburry, *How to Teach Grammar*, (Malaysia: Longman, 2004), 6 th Ed, p. 13.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p.13

*“Grammar is the way in which words change themselves and group together to make sentences. The grammar of language is what happens to words when they become plural or negative, or what order is used when we make question or join two clauses to make one sentence.”*

As shown above that grammar is study about how to arrange the words into the sentences in a grammatical order, from the change of words until combine some words in order to make the meaningful sentences.

Actually, English lesson has been taught in many levels of schools and it has been taught for long time but the result is still considered unsatisfactory, include the achievement of students in learning grammar still low<sup>5</sup>. Often the students think that grammar is the main problem of English. Grammar becomes the most difficult part in learning English for students especially for ESL students. There are some previous studies shows that the achievement of students in grammar is low. The first studied done by Manokaran, Ramlingan and Adriana. They studied on the use of past tenses of Malaysian learners. The research identified seven types of mistakes made by the students in their writing which are tense shifting, agreement, missing auxiliary be, wrong verb form, addition and miss-formation and misordering. The participants also found difficulty in applying the correct tense to the verbs in their sentences<sup>6</sup>. The second studied done by Pratami. She studied on improving students' grammar proficiency of simple past tense in writing, the research also showed that the participants didn't know how to form regular and irregular verb<sup>7</sup>.

The next studied done by Saadiyah. The researcher studied about errors in writing, such as the use of tenses, prepositions and

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<sup>5</sup> Ramelan, *Linguistics and Its Contribution to Language Teacher*, (Semarang: IKIP Semarang Press, 1991), p.3.

<sup>6</sup> Manokaran, J., Ramalingan, C., & Adriana, K, “A Corpus-Based Study on the Use of Past Tense Auxiliary ‘Be’ in Argumentative Essays of Malaysian ESL Learners”. *Journal of English Language Teaching*. Vol.6 No.10: 2016.

<sup>7</sup> Pratami, A.S, A Thesis of Bachelor : “*Improving the Eight Grade Students' Grammar Proficiency of Simle Past Tense*” (Yogyakarta: Sanata Dharma University Yogyakarta, 2008)

vocabulary are the most common and frequent type of errors made by learners. The learners usually face difficulties in learning the grammatical aspect of the Target Language, such as articles, the uses correct tenses and preposition.<sup>8</sup> The last studied done by Widiastuti. She studied on the difficulties in mastering the simple past tense; the research found that students had difficulties on the use of auxiliaries, adverbial, the agreement between subject and verbs, negative form and interrogative form, and the use of regular and irregular verb.<sup>9</sup>

Based on the previous studies, show that grammar is one of the difficulty language components for students, especially for ESL students. Those also show that students have difficulties in learning tenses. They still find difficulties in using the correct structure in English. However, the structural differences between Indonesia and English. This might mostly because the students are influenced by their mother tongue on the acquisition of the new structures. This support by Caroline & Coffin in their study, they stated that “Students whose first language is not English often have significant difficulties with some aspects of English grammar that are distinct from the problems that native speakers have”.<sup>10</sup> Thus, it might cause students to make some grammatical errors.

In addition in the case, the problem also might be caused by inappropriate methods or techniques that used in the process of teaching and learning grammar. This support by explained from Ramelan in his research. Ramelan stated that:<sup>11</sup>

*“The failure of our English Instruction can be explained by the following possibilities: either there is something*

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<sup>8</sup> Saadiyah, *Error Analysis of the Written English Essays of Secondary School Students in Malaysia : A Case Study*. Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities (Universiti Kebangsaan, 2009)

<sup>9</sup> Widiastuti, P, A Thesis of Bachelor: “A study on the difficulties in mastering the simple present tense and simple past tense among the third grade students of SLTP Kanisius Bambanglipuro Bantul Yogyakarta” (Yogyakarta: Sanata Dharma University Yogyakarta, 2003)

<sup>10</sup> Caroline Coffin, et.al., *Teaching Academic Writing* (New York: Routledge, 2003) p.32

<sup>11</sup> Ramelan, *Linguistics and Its Contribution to Language Teacher*, (Semarang: IKIP Semarang Press, 1991), p.2.

*wrong with the teacher because they know little about the principle of foreign language teaching or the material is not suitable for Indonesian students”*

Based on the Ramelan's stated, there are two possibilities factor that might cause students find difficulties in learning grammar, namely the material is not suitable for Indonesian students. This factor already explained in previous paragraph, which it caused by the structural differences between Indonesia and English, thus the students find difficulties in using correct structure and make some grammatical errors. The second factor is knowledge of English teachers about principle of foreign language teaching. This factor refers to the way of the teachers manage or monitor their students in the class, include how to the teachers explain the material and how the teachers apply method or technique that used in the process of learning. In other words, method or techniques that used have influence in process of learning grammar.

Generally, there are many methods or techniques in teaching and learning grammar. There are some methods commonly claimed to have been introduced to Indonesia ELT, such as Traditional/Grammar-Translation Method, The Direct Method, The Audio-lingual Method and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT).<sup>12</sup> All of the methods have characteristic which can make the process of learning grammar successfully. In Indonesian formal education system, teachers only used the Traditional method. This support by Nikolaus Pasassung in their researcher, he stated that: “The Traditional Method is still the dominant ELT method in most Indonesian EFL classrooms, especially in the formal education sector”.<sup>13</sup> Again, this support by Samsuri's contention that: “The Traditional Method used to be the only method of language teaching in Indonesia”<sup>14</sup>. From this, shows that English teachers in Indonesia commonly use Traditional Method or Grammar-Translation Method in learning process.

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<sup>12</sup> Nikolaus Pasassung, Doctoral Dissertation: “*Teaching English in An "Acquisition-Poor Environment": An Ethnographic Example of A Remote Indonesian EFL Classroom*” (Sydney: University of Sydney, 2003), 14

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p.14

<sup>14</sup> Samsuri, *Analisis Bahasa (Language Analysis)* (Jakarta: Jembatan,1983), 41

A look of history of English Language Teaching shows that grammar teaching can be done either inductively and deductively. Grammar translation or called Traditional Method is the first method that was for teaching language. It approaches the language first through detailed analysis of its grammar rules, followed by application of this knowledge to the task of translating sentences and text into and out of target language.<sup>15</sup> In the Traditional Method, grammar is taught deductively, it means that the study of rules are presented and studied before practical example of the rules are given. Thus, the students learn grammar from the rule first then practice through some exercise. The expectation of using Traditional method in learning process is to improve the quality of ELT, but in fact in Indonesia, the quality of ELT is not satisfactory. The result is contrast with the expectation.

In this case, the teachers need something new that can be used to solve the problem. Actually, in learning grammar, technique-resource combinations are often modified to structure-discourse match.<sup>16</sup> The combination can be used effectively in the teaching of grammar. It means that integration of several methods or techniques is needed in learning grammar. The English teachers can combine the traditional method with the other methods or use media which is suitable to be applied in classroom. The teachers can use some well-developed and fascinating in the classroom in order to make a grammar lesson effective, beneficial and interesting.

However, there are many media can be used to support in learning activities, such as pictures, chart and graphs, games, songs, puppet, and timeline. One of them is Timeline. Timeline based on workman (2008, p.4), are line and drawings that provide a visual representation of different verb forms, showing when things happen or are happening in the present, past or future. It is used to show how a particular language item (often a verb in a particular tense and aspect) places particular events or situations in time and in

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<sup>15</sup> Rabeya Nasrin Khan, A Thesis of Bachelor: *"Effective Grammar Teaching in ESL Classroom"*. (Bangladesh: BRAC University, 2007), p.2

<sup>16</sup> Henny Uswatun Khasanah, "Teaching Grammar Using Picture". Vol.1 No. 10, OKARA 2005,

relation to other events.<sup>17</sup> Timeline is chosen because it is simple and related with the time. It means that timeline is appropriate with the focus of this study, it is about learning simple past tense. Thus, timeline seems as an easy media of visual aids in English grammar learning that is used to illustrate tenses and time expression easily and clearly. Timeline is already applied in the English learning process and the result is that it can make the learning process successful.

This is supported by some previous studies, the first studied done by Nguyen Thanh Huy, Dong Thap University in Vietnam entitled *Using Timelines and Concept Questions in Teaching Present Tenses – A Theoretical Research*. The objective of this study is to investigate the theoretical background of timelines and concept questions. The results suggest that the practical roles of these methods benefit both teachers and students. It makes students feel more interested and useful in studying grammar, especially in learning grammar tenses.

The next study done by Naumi Fiza Intan, Sunan Ampel State Islamic University Surabaya in Surabaya entitled *The Effect of Using Timeline Strategy to Improve Students' Writing Ability in Recount Text at the First Year Students in Hidayatul Ummah Senior High School*. The purpose of this study is to know the effect of timeline strategy to improve students' writing ability in recount text at the first year of SMA Hidayatul Ummah Surabaya. The result of this study showed that timeline can improve the students' writing ability in Hidayatul Ummah Senior High School.

Overall of the previous studies show that Timeline can be used in the learning process. The results of studies show that timeline has influence in learning grammar. It helps the teacher to enhance students' interest and participation in the classroom and for students, it helps them feel more interested and understand about the material. Timeline includes the visual aid or media. Visual media is related to sense of view, so it helps the students understand and remember concepts more easily. Based on the reason, the

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<sup>17</sup> Nguyen Thanh Huy, "Using Timelines and Concept Questions in Teaching Present Tenses - A Theoretical Research". *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Academic Research*. Vol.4 No.3, 206

researchers choose timeline as media to improve students' English ability, especially in improving achievement of students' grammar in Simple Past Tense. Because, Simple Past Tenses is one of tenses difficulties that faced by the Indonesian students learning English. This Support by Rizkianto in his research, he explanted that: "One of tenses problem that encountered by Indonesian learning English is simple past tense".<sup>18</sup>. In this case, the researcher will try to improve students' grammar ability in simple past tense through timeline as media to teach in MTs Negeri 2 Surabaya.

## B. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Is there any significant difference of students' grammar ability in simple past tense before and after being taught by using timeline as media?
2. What are the students' responses on using Timeline as media in teaching simple past tense in eight grade of MTs Negeri 2 Surabaya?

## C. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. To find out the significant differences of students' grammar ability in simple past tense before and after being taught by using timeline as media.
2. To find out the students' responses on using Timeline as media in teaching simple past tense in eight grade of MTs Negeri 2 Surabaya.

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<sup>18</sup> Rizkianto, "Investigating Students' Difficulties in Writing Using Simple Past Tense". WKS: Studies on English Language and Education. Volume 1, Number 1, September 2014, 2356-3052

## D. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

Ary defines hypothesis as tool that is used in the research process, no ends of research<sup>19</sup>. It means that hypothesis just a tool to predict the result of the research. In this research the hypothesis is to know the effect as research not correlation on variables based on research question.<sup>20</sup> Here, the hypothesis: Timeline as media can improve the students' grammar ability. There is significant difference between students who are taught using timeline as media and students who use traditional method. The hypothesis used in this study is two side hypotheses. The formula of hypothesis is as follows:

1. NULL hypothesis (Ho)

There is no significant improvement in achievement between students who are taught by using timeline as media than who are not taught by using timeline as media.

2. Alternative Hypothesis (Ha)

There is no significant improvement in achievement between students who are taught by using timeline as media than who are not taught by using timeline as media.

Explanation:

Ho will be accepted if  $t\text{-value} < t\text{-table}$

H1 will accepted if  $t\text{-value} > t\text{-table}$

## E. SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

1. From the result of this research, it will give information or new knowledge for English teacher. This study is expected to provide some information especially about the media can be used to improve students' grammar ability. Also it can be a consideration for teacher to implement the visual media which is useful to improve the quality of English teaching and learning process.

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<sup>19</sup> Ary Donald et.al., Introduction to Research in Education: 8th editin (USA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2010).82

<sup>20</sup> Sugiyono, Metode Penelitian, (Bandung: Alfabeta,2013).96-99



2. Interesting learning media is expected to help students to understand the learning materials. Students will be easy to understand their course with the real media. It also can improve students' grammar ability.
3. This research also benefit for candidate of teacher to know knowledge and experience about using strategy that appropriate in grammar skill and make the class full enjoy. For the reader, the result of this study can be used as reference. It is hoped can give more information and contributes the knowledge.

#### F. SCOPE AND LIMITATION OF STUDY

The scope of this research is the effect of implementation of timeline as media in improving students' grammar ability in simple past tense of the eight grade students of MTs Negeri 2 Surabaya In this study, the researcher takes eight grades of students in MTs Negeri 2 Surabaya as respondent in the research. The students will get lesson about the use of timeline as media in grammar lesson.

#### G. DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

1. The improving  
The improving: become or make something to be better, to increase good qualities.<sup>21</sup> In this research, the improving was indicated by improvement of grammar ability that measured by comparing the mean score of both posttest groups.
2. Timeline  
Timeline: A graphical representation of a period of time, on which important events are marked. Timeline are often used in education to help students and researchers with the understanding the order or chronology of historical events and

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<sup>21</sup> Martin H. Manser, *Oxford Learners Pocket Dictionary*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), p.209

trends for a subject. When showing time on a specific scale on an axis, a timeline can be used to visualize time lapses between events, durations (such as a lifetimes or wars), and the simultaneity or overlap of spans and events.<sup>22</sup> In this study, the researcher wants to use timeline as visual media to teach simple past tense.

3. Grammar Ability

Grammar ability is a person's ability to use set of language rules which is created phrases and sentences that convey meaning correctly. In this study the researcher means of grammar ability is students' ability to study and understand about the use of simple past tense.

4. Simple past tense

Simple past tenses is defined as indicates an activity or situation began and ended at a particular time in the past. Thus, simple past tense talks about action or situation that happened in the past.

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<sup>22</sup> Jonny Ingham in Timeline in EFL (<https://eflrecipes.com/2014/06/21/timelines/>) access at February 27, 2017.