

Chapter One

Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher explains the introduction of this study. It includes the background of the study that discusses the reasons why the researcher chose to conduct this topic. In addition, the researcher also provides the statement and limitation of the problem, the research questions, and the purposes of the study. The significance of the study and the outline of the study are also presented in this chapter.

Background of the Study

Teaching English as a foreign language in Indonesia starts from primary to tertiary education. Many elementary schools teach English at the 4th grade. Even in some areas, there are many students who learn English as foreign language when they are at kindergarten. The materials which are delivered to elementary students are still simple. For example, one of materials taught by elementary teachers is introducing vocabulary, such as parts of body, animals, hobbies, numbers, and alphabet. On the other hand, the materials for junior and senior high school students are more complex and focus on four language skills. Some examples of the materials for junior high school students are part of speech, kinds of text, and expressions. In addition, kinds of text, expressing and responding something, vocabulary enrichment, and tenses are some examples of the materials for senior high school students. In tertiary education, teachers teach English to students. They teach English for specific purpose and English for academic

purpose. In English for specific purpose, the subjects will be English for tourism, English for children, and English for business. If the teachers teach English for tourism, the materials taught by the teachers are related tourism spot and the language used in tourism. In English for academic purpose, the subjects will be related to writing essay and paper presentation. The materials taught are related to grammar, vocabulary, and phonetic. In other words, teaching English in Indonesia has been encouraged by the government from the primary level up to tertiary level.

In English teaching process, teachers teach language skills as well as language components. The kinds of language skills are receptive skills and productive skills. The receptive skills refer to listening and reading and the productive skills refer to speaking and writing. Meanwhile, language components mean in this study refer to grammar. Both language skills and language components are taught together, as they are connected to each other. Language components are taught to support the language skills. For example, grammar is used as the basic component to develop writing skill, reading skill, listening skill, and speaking skill; such as students are taught part of speech before they create a sentence; students pay attention to the grammatical structures, punctuation, spelling, and lexis when reading; students are taught the difference of present tense and past tense, before they practice listening; students are taught the sentence patterns so that they can speak accurately.

One of the language components used to support the four language skills is grammar. Therefore, teaching grammar is important to be taught in the process of

teaching English. Teaching grammar is necessary, because grammar roles importantly in language skills. Widodo (2006) stated that “grammar enables learners to comprehend a sentence interrelationship in a paragraph, a passage and a text” (p. 122). Thus, in writing skill, grammar roles to help writers in arranging sentences correctly, so the written form can be understood. Finally, grammar also plays important role in vocabulary context. Grammar can make some lexical items meaningful and communicative when they are used based on the grammatical rules. The process of teaching grammar includes meaning, structure of sentences, and use (Widodo, 2006). Teaching grammar is included in teaching English process, so English teachers can encourage learners to understand English better through teaching grammar.

One of the subjects included in teaching grammar is teaching tenses. Based on Oxford dictionary (2008), “Tense is a verb form that shows the time of action or state” (p.458). It means that tense is transformed from verb that is related to the time of action. Meanwhile, according to Cowan (2008), tense shows the time in which an action happens in relation to the occasion of speaking. Regarding those definitions, tense is a verb form which is connected to time and action.

Ideally, when English teachers teach tenses, students will more understand the sentence patterns, the form of sentence, and the grammatical rules. In fact, based on the researcher’s experience and informal interview with two students, there are some problems arising when teaching tenses. When English teachers teach tenses, it needs more time than other subjects of grammar, because students have to memorize and internalize all the formulas of the tenses. It makes students

reluctant to do it. Sometimes, they are confused in using the correct tenses in appropriate situation, because they learn tenses as their foreign language which is different from their first language. Based on Çakır (2011), mother tongue interference causes errors in using tenses. Çakır gave an example of the misuse and misconception between simple present and present continuous, covering incorrect and correct form, like “I am playing football every Sunday” and “I play football every Sunday” (p.125). Çakır further analyzed that using the language correctly for appropriate situations seems quite difficult for foreign language students. Moreover, it is difficult for English teachers to simplify the explanation of the tenses. Students are still confused to differ between one tense and another tense, because each tense has some different characteristics and formulas. Therefore, students have not known yet to apply the appropriate tenses when they speak English. Concerning the problems arising in teaching tenses, the researcher chose this topic, because the researcher wanted to find out the teachers’ strategies and the problems faced by English teachers in teaching tenses.

The teachers at Language Training Center of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta (LTC of UMY) are assigned to teach students who are from various majors. The materials focus on emphasizing four language skills which involve grammar. In the course book used in LTC of UMY, there are some grammar focuses which discuss tenses, such as in level 1 (simple present and present continuous tense) and level 2 (simple past and past continuous tense). During teaching tenses, the students might get confused and face difficulties due to the fact that English is not their major. In addition, English is not their mother tongue,

so they may misuse and have misconception of the use of tenses. The particular system of tenses is different from Bahasa Indonesia. It contributes in certain problems faced by English teachers in teaching tenses.

There are two reasons why the researcher conducted this study. First, the researcher has experienced when doing teaching practicum that teaching and learning tenses were not easy. It is also supported by the two students interviewed informally by the researcher who declared that tenses are difficult for them to be learned. Therefore, the researcher wanted to find out the problems faced by English teachers at LTC of UMY. Second, the researcher wanted to discover the English teachers' strategies in teaching tenses so that the strategies can be used as the appropriate ways to deliver tenses. In addition, since the researcher will be an English teacher, the researcher needs to figure out the problems and the teachers' strategies in teaching tenses.

The Statement and Limitation of the Problem

When teaching tenses, it will deal with some aspects. The aspects can be related to teaching materials, teaching method, teaching idea, teaching approach, teaching aids, teachers' competence, and teaching strategies. The aspects may potentially create problems when teaching tenses. Problems arising in teaching tenses might come from teachers and students. In addition, English teachers usually use strategies or appropriate ways to teach tenses to students, so it might make teachers easier in delivering the materials and students more understand about tenses. However, the information regarding the detailed problems

encountered and the strategies applied by LTC of UMY teachers have not been available.

As stated before, there are some aspects that can be studied when dealing with teaching tenses. However, this research focused on the problems faced by English teachers in teaching tenses at Language Training Center of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta (LTC of UMY). In addition, the researcher also focused on the teachers' strategies in teaching tenses at LTC of UMY, because the researcher wanted to obtain deep research analysis of teaching tenses' strategies. Teachers' strategies in this study refer to the ways used by the teachers in delivering the tenses. These teachers' strategies do not refer to the definition of strategy which can overcome the problems faced by the English teachers in teaching tenses or other definitions. The definition of strategy which is discussed in this study is an effective way used by the teachers to facilitate in teaching delivery.

The Research Questions

Based on the statements of the problem above, the researcher has two research questions in this study. They are:

1. What are the problems faced by the English teachers in teaching tenses at Language Training Center of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta (LTC of UMY)?
2. What are the English teachers' strategies in teaching tenses at Language Training Center of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta (LTC of UMY)?

The Purposes of the Study

According to the research questions above, there are two aims of this study which want to be achieved by the researcher. They are:

1. To find out the problems in teaching tenses at Language Training Center of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta (LTC of UMY).
2. To find out the teachers' strategies in teaching tenses at Language Training Center of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta (LTC of UMY).

The Significance of the Study

The results of this study are expected to give some positive results as follows:

For teachers. This study can be as a reference for teachers when they teach tenses through using various strategies in teaching tenses. It is useful to give suggestions to English teachers when they teach tenses. English teachers are able to imitate these teaching strategies which are found out by the researcher to be implemented in the classroom.

For students. The findings of this study are beneficial for students to recognize what the problems faced by the teachers in teaching tenses. Thus, students can help teachers to change their negative attitude toward tenses. In addition, students and teachers can cooperatively work to succeed the strategies in teaching tenses.

For the researcher. By doing this study, the researcher gains experience and knowledge of teaching strategies. The researcher obtains a deep understanding of present environment in teaching tenses, such as problems and

strategies. Hence, when the researcher becomes an English teacher later, she can face the problems well through implementing the strategies.

For other researchers. This study gives beneficial source to other researchers who are also interested in this topic. From this study, they can obtain additional reference about the problems and the English teachers' strategies in teaching tenses and the review of related study which can help them to complete their theory.

The Outline of the Study

The first chapter explains about the introduction of this research. First is the reasons why the researcher chose the topic. Second is the statement and limitation of the problem. Third, the researcher states the research questions. Fourth is about the purposes of the research. Fifth is about the parties who get benefits from this study. Sixth is about the outline of the research.

The second chapter focuses on explaining the literature review. This chapter provides the theories which are related to the teaching strategies of tenses. It also discusses the review of related study and the conceptual framework.

The third chapter discusses the methodology used in this study. This chapter includes five parts. There is the research methodology which explains the research design used. There are also research setting and participant, instrument of study, data collection methods, and data analysis.

The fourth chapter contains the research findings and discussion. The chapter includes two main findings based on what the researcher has obtained. First, there are problems related to teachers, students, materials, and mother

tongue or first language interference faced by English teachers in teaching tenses. Second, there are English teachers' strategies in teaching tenses. The strategies are used by the LTC of UMY teachers to explain tenses to students.

The fifth chapter draws a conclusion and a recommendation of the research. The first part provides the conclusion of the research which has been inferred by the researcher based on the finding and discussion. The second part is that the researcher gives suggestion to the parties related to this topic. After recognizing the findings, the researcher needs to provide a recommendation, so that in the future, it will be beneficial for them.