

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of seven points to be treated i.e. background of the study, statement of problems, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation, definition of terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

Language is the most important tool in the life of human beings. It is used to communicate. Indeed, language influences all aspects of life. Even, it is said that language can not be separated from the life of human beings.

There are so many languages in the world. Among them is English. As other languages, English has its own rules. The rules of English are different from other languages. Lado (1956) argues that the differences of English may cause difficulty for those who learnt it. Learners tend to keep their mother tongue as a rule instead of the rules of the foreign language.

Learning English is very interesting, because we can know many words, how to pronounce them, how to listen them, and how to write them. English is an international language which is used by many people around the world including Indonesia.

In Indonesia English is regarded as the first foreign language. It is learned compulsorily from elementary school up to senior high school. By learning English, learners are expected to be able to use it in their daily life. To be able to

use it, learners have to be proficient in the English skill namely : Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing which are supported by English sub skill : grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation. Grammar is the structure of a language and the way in which linguistics such as words and phrase are combined to produce sentences in the language(Richard et,al.1985).

Simple past tense is used to express finished activities that happened in the past.

The formula of simple past tense: S + VERB-2 + O + A.

Example: *He played badminton yesterday.*

In this study the writer choose the eighth grade students of SMPK Sancta Familia Kupang in school year 2018/2019. The reason to choose this school to be the subject of this study, because the writer experienced when doing teachers training or Praktek Pengalaman Lapangan (PPL) she found that students still committed errors and mistakes in using simple past tense. For axample: *Mary is sick yesterday*, the sentence is ungrammatical. The correct sentence is *Mary was sick yesterday*.

By seeing at those problems, as an English teacher to be in the future, the writer is intends to analyse the ability level of students at SMPK Sancta Familia Kupang in using Simple Past Tense and the area of difficulties committed by the students in constructing Simple Past Tense. In order to answer those problems, the writer is going to conduct a research entitled **“A Study on the Ability In the Using of Simple Past Tense of The Eight Grade Students of SMPK Sta. Familia Kupang in the School Year 2019/2020”**.

1.2 Statements of the Problems

The problems to be answered in this study are formulated in the following questions:

1. Are the eighth grade students of SMPK Sancta Familia Kupang able to use the simple past tense in sentences?
2. What is the ability level of the students in using the simple past tense in sentences?

1.3 Objective of the Study

The objective of this study are are stated in the following:

1. To find out whether or not the eighth grade students of SMPK Sancta Familia Kupang are able to use simple past tense in sentences.
2. To find out the level of the students ability in using the simple past tense in sentences.

1.4 Significance of the Study

In the followings are the significance or benefits of the study to English Teachers and students of SMPK Sancta Familia Kupang and to the writer herself.

1. For the students

By knowing the results of this study, the students of SMPK Sancta Familia in Kupang especially the eighth grade students will know the level in using simple past tense in sentences. The students can be motivated to study grammar in general and simple past tense in particular.

2. For the English teacher

The English teacher at the researched school would be informed about his/her student's mastery regarding tenses, in order to make necessary changes regarding the material, method, and strategy of teaching simple past tense in sentences.

3. For the writer

Through this study, the writer can study and know more about the use of simple past in sentences. And this study is useful for her to improve her own knowledge particularly about simple past tense.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

In general there are three kinds of tenses, they are present tenses, future tenses, and past tenses. There are some kinds of simple past tense, they are past simple, past continuous, past perfect, and past perfect continuous. The writer only chooses and focuses her study on the simple past tense because based on the writer's observation and experiences, some students still committed mistakes in the use of the simple past tense. This study will be conducted at the students of SMPK Sancta Familia in the school year 2018/2019.

1.6 Definition of Terms

There are some terms in this writing that need to be explained. The definitions are intended to ease the reader to understand part of the whole thesis. They are presented in detail below.

1. Ability

Ability is a potential capacity or power to do something physically or mentally Hornby, (1987: 2). In this study ability means the students ability in using present tenses in English sentences.

2. Tense

It is the form the verbs that may be used to indicate time or actions state expressed by verb Hornby, (1989:1324). This study, tense refers to time context whether action, activity in this time, in the past or in the future, had happened in the past or going on until now.

3. Simple Past tense

Simple past tense is a tense for an action completed in the past at definition time (Thomson, A.J and Martined, A.V, 1990: 153).

Past tense is form of a verb which is usually used to show that the act or state described by the verb occurred at a time before the present (*Richard, et al.* 1985: 209). This forms of verb is called verb-2 in English linguistic.

4. SMPK Sancta Familia Kupang

SMPK Sancta Familia Kupang is one of the private schools in Kupang. It is the same level as the junior high school. It is located in Jln. Oebolifo IV Sikumana, East Nusa Tenggara Province.