

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the writer presents background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation of the study, and definition of terms.

1.1. Background of the Study

Language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols used for human communication (Wardhaugh, 1978:3). Furthermore, the use of language as described by Cook, (2008:1) is to express our love or hatred, to achieve our goals and careers, to gain artistic satisfaction or simple pleasure, to pray or to blaspheme. Through language we plan our life and remember our past, we exchange our ideas and experiences; we form our social form and individual identities.

We cannot neglect the fact that in Indonesia each place has its own mother tongue and we also speak our national language, Bahasa Indonesia. It is a pride for Indonesian people that we can communicate among us using our national language. However, as a part of this world, it is a pre require for people to learn English because, nowadays, English has been widely accepted as an international language. The writer believes that English language plays important roles for people around the world, it becomes a medium to communicate among people.

The writer assumes that in learning a new language the first thing which is important to do is the learners have to understand the grammar of the language itself. To develop students' English skills in reading, speaking, listening and

writing, they should have adequate knowledge of grammar. Tenses generally express time relative to the moment of speaking.

In Indonesia, English is a foreign language. English has been regarded as one of the subjects included in the School Curriculum. Although grammar is not described in C-13 but it has been implied in four skills because automatically learned by the learners when they study listening, speaking, reading, and writing at the same time they study grammar. In teaching English there are two main important things to consider. Firstly, language skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. Secondly, language components, namely grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation.

When the writer did her teaching practice program at SMP Negeri 1 Kupang she found that students' knowledge of tenses was so limited, they did not know the rule of the Past Tense, Present Tense and Future Tense. Dealing with learning the past tense, when they were given the task to compose their past experience like to write a recount text, most of them were not able to use the past form of verb. They were not able to distinguish either irregular verb or regular verb of Past Tense.

Learning Simple Past Tense is very important because one of the basic competences needed for the students is the ability to understand monolog simple functional text in form of narrative and recount text in which past forms of the verb are very commonly used.

As a teacher to be, it is indeed a challenging task to introduce a new language to the students; there are things to be considered such as how to use the strategies and approaches in teaching English in order to motivate students in

learning process, the creativity of teachers to choose and select methods and furthermore they have to observe either the methods which he or she uses in teaching and learning and the process does benefit for the students or not. One way to help students is the use of the discovery learning strategy in the teaching of grammar, especially in the teaching of simple past tense.

Castranova quoted from Bicknell–Holmes and Hoffman (2000) who describe that the three main attributes of Discovery Learning as 1) exploring and problem solving to create, integrate, and generalize knowledge, 2) student driven, interest- based activities in which the student determines the sequence and frequency, and (3) activities to encourage integration of new knowledge into the learner’s existing knowledge base. Wachidah and Gunawan (2014) state that C-13 designs the learning method to welcome the 21st century learning model where the model of learning process is shift from students being taught to students discovered independently the variety learning resources beyond teacher’ boundaries and education unit.

Based on those problems the writer is interested to do the study with the title “The Use of Discovery Learning Strategy to Increase the Ability in Using Simple Past Tense of The Eighth Grade Students of SMP Negeri 1 Kupang in the School Year 2016/2017”.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

To focus more on the problem of doing the study, the writer formulates the problem stated as following: Can the use of Discovery Learning Strategy improve

the ability in using simple past tense of the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Kupang in the School Year 2016/2017?

1.3 Objective of Research

In line with the statement of the problem above, the study aims at finding out whether or not the use of Discovery Learning Strategy can improve the ability in using simple past tense of the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Kupang in the school year 2016/2017.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The result of this study might be expected to give some contribution for the following persons:

1. The students

This study is expected to be beneficial for students who are learning English especially those at the researched school. By implementing the strategy, the students are helped to learn grammar especially past tense.

2. The English Teacher

Through the implementation of the strategy, it is expected that teachers of English at the researched school can consider the strategy as an alternative to help their students in learning English.

3. The Writer

Through this study, the writer can improve her knowledge about how to teach English using Discovery learning Strategy.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

This study covers the use of strategy in teaching English and it is found that there are many teaching strategies that can be used in helping students learn English such as discovery learning, jigsaw, mind mapping and so on. However, the writer only focuses on the use of discovery learning strategy to teach simple past tense to the eight grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Kupang.

1.6 Definition of Terms

There are several terms used in this study, in order to make the readers understand. The writer is inclined to believe that she has to explain those terms such as:

1. Tenses

According to Hornby (2000:1393) tense is any of the forms of the verb that may be used to indicate the time of the action or state expressed by the verb: *the past/present/future tense*.

2. Simple Past Tense

The simple past tense is a tense use to talk about activities or situations that began and ended in the past (Azar, 2003: 25). In this study, it is the tense that the writer teaches to the students.

3. Discovery Learning Strategy

Harmer (20007: 90) points out that Discovery Learning is not about how the teacher explains something which the students then have to practice, it is the students themselves who look at the language and come to their own conclusion

(with the teacher's help). This strategy is used by the writer in this research in order to improve the students' ability in using simple past tense.

4. SMP Negeri 1 Kupang

It is a public Junior High School which is located on Jl. Prof. Dr. W. Z. Yohanes No.30 Kupang, East Nusa Tenggara.