

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the background of the study, the problems of the study, the objectives of the study, the significance of the study, the scope and limitation, and the definition of key terms.

A. The Background of the Study

Linguistics is a field in language science, which studies language scientifically and its structure. According to Cambridge dictionary, third edition, linguistics is the systematic study of the structure and development of language in general or of particular languages. Many researchers are interested in conducting the research of linguistics because it gives more knowledge about English. One part of linguistics field is Second Language Acquisition (SLA).

SLA is important to understand for English teachers, English lecturers and especially for English Foreign Language (EFL) Learners; because this field is looking at learning from the learner's perspective on the process of learning by concentrating on factors which are specific to the learners rather than on those which are specific to the learning environment. SLA also has careful explanation, in this context 'second' can refer to any language that is learned subsequent to the mother tongue.¹ One of an interesting study about SLA is "Interlanguage". Interlanguage appeared in early 1970s, Larry

¹ Rod Ellis, *Second Language Acquisition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 3.

Selinker (1972), an American linguist, coined the term of Interlanguage. EFL learners construct their learning language in order to get the target language is referred to as 'Interlanguage'. The concept of interlanguage offers a general account of how SLA takes place.²

In learning second language, EFL learners probably bring unique understanding of their learning. Many researchers have proposed that interlanguages develop along predictable and clearly describable paths.³

As the EFL Learners, they should keep on trying to increase their ability, understanding about the language they learn. It is applied to all EFL learners, included the learners in university level who take faculty of English. Many people assume that generally, the EFL learners will tackle learning problem in their speaking. It caused by the problem of producing sentences. The EFL learner should think twice, when they want to produce an utterance, it can be their structure of word or sentence, their vocabulary, and many other factors. However, this problem will be easy on hand, if the EFL learners keep on practicing.

Talking about structure of word or sentence, we all know that the name of the term is syntax. However, that is very complicated for some learners, even for the learners in university; they sometimes feel that syntax is so hard to learn. Whereas, they have been learning it from junior high school, the name is not syntax but then grammar.

² Rod Ellis, *Second Language Acquisition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 31-34.

³ Manfred Pienemann, *Second Language Acquisition; A first Introduction* (Australia: Macarthur, 1995), 10.

In STAIN Kediri, the EFL learners get the material of structure of word or sentence from the first semester, but every learner probably acquire different knowledge about the material they get, it is called interlanguage, which is focused on developing learners' knowledge about the target language.

Therefore, the researcher is interested in conducting research on Second Language Acquisition of eighth semester of English department students of STAIN Kediri. Because he thinks that the students in senior level have much knowledge about English, however, it cannot be the guarantee that the students of eighth semester are going to be good in producing sentences or utterances.

The framework of this study will be the stages in ESL Acquisition: Syntactic structure which was adapted from Pienemann, Johnson and Brindley 1988 framework. It will be applied to the English students of eighth semester. The researcher is trying to prove whether the framework, which is used by the researcher, is going to give good result of the students' syntactic acquisition or not

The researcher analyzes the learning problem of EFL learners of eighth semester of STAIN Kediri in producing sentences (Syntax) based on English Second Language Acquisition: syntactic structure, which was conducted by Pienemann, Johnson, and Brindley 1988.

B. The Problem of the Study

Based on the background of the study above, the problem of the study could be described as follows: “what syntactic levels that can be reached by English Department students of eighth semester?”

C. The Objective of the Study

The objective of the study is to know the syntactic stages that can be reached when they produce sentences that will be checked in standard pattern stages of English Second Language Acquisition: Syntactic Structure by Pienemann, Johnson and Brindley 1988 framework and also to know the acquisition of syntax of the candidate of graduation of English department students.

D. The Significances of the Study

The researcher hopes this study have some significances to the lecturers and especially for the students, and also next researchers.

To the lecturers, the result of this research will be very helpful for them in improving their students' skill especially in structure and speaking skill. It is applied to all degrees of English department faculty

To the students, is to show whether the English students is successful or not in learning their foreign language. Then, the researcher hopes that the understanding of structure (syntax) of the learners will gradually improve after knowing the result of this study.

To the next researchers, is to inform them that SLA is an interesting subject, which many of its term are interesting to be conducted. Researcher

hopes that there will be next researcher interests in continuing the research of SLA, especially for syntactic Acquisition: interlanguage

E. The Scope and Limitation

The scope of this research is the Second Language Acquisition. The researcher limits the study in analyzing interlanguage; it is also limited to syntactic acquisition for eighth semester of English department students.

F. The Definition of Key Terms

1. Second Language Acquisition

SLA can be defined as the process in which people learn a language other than their mother tongue, inside or outside of a classroom.⁴

2. Interlanguage

Larry Selinker (1970s) coined this term. Interlanguage, according to him is the systematic development of learner language reflects a mental system of EFL learners.⁵

3. Syntactic Acquisition.

Acquisition of syntax or sentence pattern of the students in this research, the Second Language Acquisition standard will use that of Pienemman, Johnson, and Briendly framework.

⁴ Rod Ellis, *Second Language Acquisition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 3.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 31.