

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of the Problems

A good sentence combining, especially in English, needs appropriate knowledge on the language syntactical orders. Therefore, students should know the grammatical rules which constitute the important components of the English language. In order to make the constructed ideas meaningfully and understandably, students should also learn how to form acceptable sentences grammatically in both spoken and written forms. Moreover, students are expected to be more familiar with the communicative forms of sentence constructions in order to avoid making meaningless and ambiguous.

Grammar or structure is one of the crucial components in learning English. Having knowledge of the grammar enables learners to process and analyze sentences as well as to understand sentences well, so that it makes them easier to catch the idea of the sentences that they read or hear. In English grammar, tenses are the crucial elements to be learned and be mastered by the language learners. But first of all, it should be clear about the distinction between 'tense' and 'time'. The notion of tense and time, such as present time, past time, and future time is universal, and is independent of any particular language. While tense, on the other hand, is a linguistic device, varying from one language to the other languages.<sup>1</sup> Tense means the verb-

---

<sup>1</sup>Betty Schramphfer Azar, *Understanding and Using English Grammar* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall Regents, 1993), 3.

from that is used to express certain time relations. For example, *I speak English everyday* indicates present time, *I spoke English to John yesterday* indicates past time, while, *I will speak English to my friends tomorrow* indicates future time.

Azar categorizes tenses in English into four different types in terms of its indication of time; simple, progressive, perfect, and perfect progressive. The four types of time indication has 12 tenses. They are: 1) the simple tenses consist of simple present, simple past, simple future, 2) the progressive tenses consist of present progressive, past progressive, future progressive, 3) the perfect tenses consist of present perfect, past perfect, future perfect, and 4) the perfect progressive tenses consist of present perfect progressive, past perfect progressive, future perfect progressive.<sup>2</sup>

As a lesson that relies on memorization and ability, English has a lot of topics that order students to master and develop their ability. One of those is that the topic that is taught at the second year students of Junior High school. Some of the topics are about past tense. According to Azar, simple past tense is used to express an activity or situation that happened at one particular time in the past.<sup>3</sup> In past tense, there are topics relevant to this tense. For example, narrative, where its meaning is that a kind of text or paragraph that uses past time to convey past event or story.

---

<sup>2</sup> Betty Schramper Azar, *Ibid*, 3.

<sup>3</sup> Betty Schramper Azar, *Ibid*, 2.

Martin indicates that narrative is a story.<sup>4</sup> Kenneavy says that a narrative is a story or description of actual or factual events.<sup>5</sup> Besides, Syafi'i *et al* say that:

“Narration is storytelling whether it tells a true story or fiction. A narrative essay gives an account of one or more experiences. It tells a story to make a point or to explain an idea or event. As a result, this type of essay can be fun to read and even to write. Usually personal and often autobiographical, a narrative typically contains action, dialogue, elaborate details, and/or humor.”<sup>6</sup>

Narrative and past tense are things that are always in one place in delivering these terms. Past tense is one of components of narrative. If someone wants to know about narrative, one of the clues is that the tense of the text is in the past, or it happened in the past time.

According to schema theory, a person's accumulated information that is associated with an object, action, event, or other entity. Schemata are assumed to guide the encoding and retrieval of story information.<sup>7</sup>

This theory also underlines the correspondence between a reader's underlying knowledge structures (schemata) and the textual material determines the extent of comprehension. If the relevant schemata have led the reader to make appropriate inferences, then the textual material makes sense to the reader and is assimilated.

---

<sup>4</sup> Martin, *American Book of English Grammar* (NewYork: Health and Company Publishers, 1980), 98.

<sup>5</sup> James L. Kinneavy *et al*, *Writing in the Liberal Arts Tradition* (NewYork: Harper and Row Publisher Inc., 1969), 289.

<sup>6</sup> M. Syafi'i *et al*, *The Effective Paragraph Developments: The Process of Writing for Classroom Settings* (Pekanbaru. LBSI, 2007), 53

<sup>7</sup> Bartlett, 1932 in Peter Westwood, *What Teachers Need to Know about Reading and Writing Difficulties* (Victoria: Acer Press, 2008), 5

By this reason, instruction should address the building of knowledge structures at three levels: *first*, awareness of the nature and limitations of existing schemata; second, the ability to use the schemata efficiently and effectively within those limitations; and third, awareness of the relationship between existing schemata and the reading materials.<sup>8</sup> These levels have been translated into two general classes of intervention strategies: those designed to activate schemata and those for building schemata. When schemata are activated, readers are made aware of the general and interpretive knowledge they have, and are taught to make use of this knowledge before and during reading.

In comparison with the above reference, Short and Ryan, 1983 as cited in Westwood<sup>9</sup> described the problem of poor readers of this type as being an under utilization of existing schemata. When teachers and researchers use schema activation, they devise ways to encourage readers to use existing schemata. Examples of schema activation include making predictions, making inferences, previewing text, and evaluating text. In contrast with making readers aware of their knowledge, schema building strategies provide readers with a basic framework for organizing and storing information. Readers with problems in this area do not have available information to help them understand text. When schema building is used, an organizational structure is imposed upon the reader in an attempt to help the

---

<sup>8</sup> Peter Westwood, *I b i d*, 6.

<sup>9</sup> Peter Westwood, *I b i d*, 7.

reader form categories of strong relevant information derived from textual reading.

Based on the above theory, the schemata can be divided into at least three different classes:

- (a) Knowledge about the topic addressed in the text (content schemata).
- (b) Knowledge about how texts are organized (structural schemata).
- (c) Knowledge of the metacognitive process of merging content and structural schemata.

Relevant to the above theory, there are abilities of students in identifying the tenses in one paragraph, in this case, to identify the past tense. Past tense can be identified by students if they are able first to identify the components of a construction or a formula of past tense. If they are able to identify the components of past tense (meaning that they are able to identify past tense), it perhaps means that they will get good achievement on their narrative test.

Reading comprehension is the ability to understand the information presented in written form.<sup>10</sup> The process usually leads the understanding the message from the text. So, it can be concluded that reading comprehension is not only a process of knowing the meaning of words semantically, but also a process of getting the stated or not stated idea from the text. Especially in identifying simple past tense of narrative paragraph, Jack. C. Richards *et al*

---

<sup>10</sup>Markstein and Hirasawa (1983) in Samini. *A correlation Between Student's ability in Understanding Technical Words and Their Reading Comprehension of Technical Texts at The second Year of Informatic Engineers Departement of SMK N 1 Pangkalan Kerinci.*(Pekanbaru: UIN SUSKA RIAU. 2009), 17.

addressed that reading perceives a written text in order to understanding its contents. Its means that the understanding the results reading texts is called reading comprehension.<sup>11</sup>

Based on writer's preliminary observation at MTs N Lipatkain, the second year students of this school experienced several problems in understanding the narrative text presented by the English teacher. For example, they encountered restrict cognitive capacity to the low-level processing of letters and words that allow them to full attention to the concepts within the reading texts, especially in narrative paragraph. In addition, they also experienced cognitive constraints on the messages addressed in the text as well as the limitation in identifying the component of the reading text. Besides, they were able to identify verb forms in simple past tense, but difficult identify them in the narrative text.

Based on the problems stated above, the phenomena of this research are identified as follows:

1. Some of the students could identify the simple past tense in the sentences, but when they are encountered to reading texts they got difficulties in comprehending the text especially in narrative paragraph.
2. Some of students are master in identifying simple past tense, but they are not able to take the message from the text.
3. Some of students are able to identify simple past tense of narrative paragraph, but they are not able to identify the component of reading.

---

<sup>11</sup> Jack. C. Richards and Theodore Rogers, *Methods and Techniques in Language Teaching* (Oxford University Press, 1992), 306.

4. Some of the students get low mastery in reading task even but actually the case is that they are able in identifying simple past tense.

Based on the phenomena stated by the writers above and considering how important the ability of reading to be mastered by students, the writer feels interested in researching research of this problem entitled: The Correlation Between Mastery in Identifying Simple Past Tense of Narrative Paragraph and Reading Comprehension of the Second Year Students of Mts N Lipatkain of Kampar Kiri District of Kampar Regency.

## **B. The Definition of the Terms**

In order to avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation, it is needed to state the operational definition of terms used in this research. The definitions are stated below:

1. *Correlation* is a statistical technique that can show whether and how strongly pairs of variables are related.<sup>12</sup> In this case, the correlation between mastery in identifying simple past tense of narrative paragraph and reading comprehension.
2. *Mastery* is a great skill of knowledge.<sup>13</sup> Mastery is a great skillfulness and knowledge of some subjects or activities<sup>14</sup> Mastery is a complete control

---

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.surveysystem.com>

<sup>13</sup> Hornby, AS., *Oxford Advances Learner's Dictionary* (London: Oxford University Press, 1995),

<sup>14</sup>[http// www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com)

of knowledge.<sup>15</sup> The mastery here is the mastery in identifying simple past tense of the second year students of MTs N Lipatkain.

3. *Identify*: To establish the identify of...; To ascertain the origin, nature, or definitive characteristics of....;Biology: to determine the taxonomic classification an (an organism)...;To consider an identical or united: equate...;To associate or affiliate (oneself) closely with a person or group.<sup>16</sup>
4. *Simple Past Tense* is used to express an activity or situation that happened at one particular time in the past. It began and ended in the past<sup>17</sup>.
5. *Reading Comprehension* is the level of understanding of writing.<sup>18</sup> Comprehension is a complex thinking process; it is how we come to understanding what we read.
6. *Student*: the word student is etymologically derived through middle English from the Latin second-type conjugation verb “studere”, meaning “to direct one zeal at”; hence a student could be described as ‘one who directs zeal at a subject’. In its widest use,’ is used for everyone who is learning.<sup>19</sup>

## C. The Problems

### 1. The Identification of the Problem

---

<sup>15</sup> Hornby, AS., *I b i d.*, 523.

<sup>16</sup>Answer.com,2009 identify, retrived in June 08 2009 from <http://www.answer.com/topic.identify>

<sup>17</sup>Betty Schramper Azar, *Understanding and Using Grammar* (New Jersey: Regents/ Prentice Hall. 1993), 2.

<sup>18</sup> Wikipedia the Free Encyclopedia, *Reading Comprehension*, retrieved from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ Reading comprehension](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reading_comprehension).

<sup>19</sup> Wikipedia free encyclopedia,2009 *Students*, retrieved from: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/students>.

There are some problems occurred among pupils at the school. According to the theory stated above, this school should have been having students who have standard comprehension in reading, especially narrative.

In fact, the problems happened around the ability of student in comprehend narrative paragraph. To make the problems clear, the writer identifies them as follows:

- a. Why did the students get difficulties in comprehending the text especially in the narrative paragraph while they could identify the simple past tense in the narrative paragraph?
- b. Why were the students not able to take the message from the text if they mastered to identify the simple past tense of narrative paragraph?
- c. Why did the students master to identify simple past tense of narrative paragraph but they were not able to identify the generic structure of the narrative paragraph?
- d. Why did the students get low mastery in reading tasks while the actual the case is that they are able in identifying simple past tense?
- e. How is the students' mastery in identifying simple past tense in narrative paragraph?
- f. How is the students' reading comprehension in narrative paragraph?
- g. Is there any significant correlation between students' mastery in identifying simple past tense and reading comprehension?

## **2. The Limitation of the Problem**

Considering of many problems found in this research, the problems will be limited to:

- a. Students' mastery in identifying simple past tense in narrative paragraph.
- b. Students' reading comprehension in identifying simple past tense in narrative paragraph.
- c. The Significant correlation between students' mastery in identifying simple past tense and reading comprehension

### **3. The Formulation of the Problem**

Based on the limitation of the problem above, the problems in this research will be formulated on to the following research questions:

1. How is the students' mastery in identifying simple past tense of narrative paragraph at MTs N Lipatkain?
2. How is the students' reading comprehension of narrative paragraph at MTs N Lipat Kain?
3. Is there any significant correlation between students' mastery in identifying simple past tense of narrative paragraph and reading comprehension?

## **D. The Objectives and the Significant of the Research**

### **1. The Objective of the Research**

Based on the formulation of the problems previously, the objectives of this research are as follows:

- a. To find out the students' mastery in identifying simple past tense in narrative paragraphs.
- b. To find out the students' reading comprehension of the narrative paragraph.
- c. To find out whether or not there is any significant correlation between students' mastery in identifying simple past tense and their reading comprehension.

### **2. The significance of the Research**

After conducting this research, the writer hopes that this research is expected:

- a. To contribute useful information to the Head Master and the Regional Ministry of Religious Affairs that manages MTs Negeri Lipatkain.
- b. To give valuable information to the English teachers of MTs Negeri Lipatkain about the students' mastery in identifying simple past tense of narrative paragraph and reading comprehension.
- c. To be one of the intended requirements for the award of Sarjana Degree in English Education Program at the Faculty of Education and Teacher's Training of State Islamic University of Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau.