CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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Introduction

I.1 Background of the Study

The Broad Outlines of the Educational Program of the 1994 curriculum of Indonesia stated that language is basically a tool to convey thoughts, ideas, opinions, and feeling. And English is the first foreign language in Indonesia that is considered important for the purpose of the absorption and the development of science, technology, cultural art, and the construction of the relationship with other nations. So, it is a must for the students to learn English in order to be able to develop themselves in science, technology, and cultural art fields.

In learning English, grammar has been an important subject, because it is a set of rules by which people speak and write. According to Cook and Suter (1980:2) "A grammar is a written description of the rules of language." In order to be able to speak and write correctly, the learners must obey and comprehend the grammar. But it is not easy to comprehend a grammar of a foreign language. Different rules that are not familiar to be used can be one of the obstacles. Many students may find a long explanation of grammar of a new language difficult because the students do not have the background knowledge of the new language (Harmer, 1985:53).

Many difficulties come up in teaching grammar because of its difference with the Indonesian's structure. In Indonesian, there is no change in the verb although different time is used while in English grammar the verb must be

adapted with the time signal. In making it understandable, the following example will describe it.

INDONESIAN: - Saya **pergi** ke sekolah <u>hari ini</u>.

                          - Saya **pergi** ke sekolah <u>kemarin.</u>

                          - Saya **pergi** ke sekolah <u>besok</u>.

                          - Saya **pergi** ke sekolah <u>saat ini</u>.

ENGLISH: - I **go** to school <u>today</u>.

                          - I **went** to school <u>yesterday</u>.

                          - I **will go** to school <u>tomorrow</u>.

                          - I **am going** to school <u>at this moment</u>.

In the examples above, the Indonesian's verbs do not change at all although they use different time signals. In contrast, the English's verbs are changing according to their time signals, and these rules are called 'Tenses" in English. Tense is a part of grammar that influences the speaker in uttering sentences. But the use of tenses seems to be confusing for the students - remembering the difference of the structure of both languages. Indonesian's structure does not need to change the verb even though the time signal is not the same, but it is different with the English's structure. The students must deal with these rules of the tenses in the English learning as a foreign language. Because the students have no background knowledge about those rules at all, these rules of tenses arise the students' complication in understanding those rules. But tense is a part of grammar that cannot be separated from the English learning. Cook and Suter (1980:47) define tense as the forms of verbs used for information in the

communication. And the information relates to time. Hornby (1985:78) states, "Tense stands for a verb-form or a series of verb-forms used to express a time relation." This statement is supported by Swan (1980:604) "In English, we use different verb-forms to show differences in time."

Nowadays, teachers have been encouraged to look beyond textbooks and find other alternatives that suit with the students' need in making the learning process more effective and exciting. In response, lots of good and great ideas come up. And they have been conducted by many teachers with satisfying results. But the writer believes that using media in teaching English to young learners is more effective than any other ways especially media that emphasizes on a visual-aids. Visual media can make the students interested in and pay attention to what is taught. Picture is one of the examples. Magdalena (1989:65) states that one of the benefits of pictures is that they can arouse the students' interest and attract the students' attention. Pictures can be used not only to teach vocabulary – as many teachers have done it – but it can also be used to teach tenses. Ernestova (1981:6) says "It is obvious that almost every picture showing some activity can be used for practicing verb tenses. One way is to ask about what people in a picture are doing, have done, will do, and will have done in two hours' time."

But there are many kinds of pictures like: caricature, **humorous cartoons**, and comic strips. In the writer's study, humorous cartoons is chosen to be the visual media in teaching present progressive tense for the elementary students. The reason is that cartoons have the amusing sight that can be more attractive than picture for the young learners. Cartoon is an amusing drawing or picture (Oxford

English Dictionary, 1961:58). " When used properly, cartoons can have a powerful information and affective impact. It is as if the frames of a motion picture had been 'frozen' to permit a minute examination at one's leisure. Internationally recognized conventions can be used to suggest speech, motion, and even thought" (Pint, 1981:44).

To bring a relax situation, humor is involved here. This statement is in line with Lim's sentence (1989:17) that the basic principle that learning best takes place when there is laughter, fun, entertainment, emotional participation, applies not only to children but to everyone, regardless of age. Humor enables the students to release their tensions (Grotjahn, 1957:7). That is why humorous cartoon that is considered as one of good visual media is chosen to be conducted in the writer's study.

The purpose of taking the fourth grade of elementary students as the subjects in teaching present progressive tense is because some school have started to introduce English to their students from the kindergarten level, so at the fourth grade level, these students start to learn about present progressive tense tense.

Basing on this reason the writer would like to do her research at the elementary school by using humorous cartoon in order to find out whether her way is successful or not.

I.2 Statement of the Problem

Many ways of teaching tenses have been done by many researchers, and the results are satisfying. But in this study, the writer believes that using

humorous cartoon as one of good visual media can have a powerful impact in the learning process for the young learners. This study intends to answer this following question: "How is the learning achievement of the present progressive tense between groups of the fourth grade of elementary students taught by using humorous cartoons and the ordinary way (explanation and exercises only without any humorous cartoons)?"

I.3 Objective of the Study

Based on the research question above, the writer wants to find out the impact of teaching present progressive tense by using humorous cartoon for the young learners. The writer would like to know whether or not the technique of teaching present progressive tense by using humorous cartoons has better achievement than the ordinary technique.

I.4 Significance of the Study

Hopefully, humorous cartoon can be one of the many alternatives that suit with the students' need. In the learning of present progressive tense for the young learners, it will give a new effective and exciting way. It is also hoped that the results of this study can be a useful contribution for other researcher in choosing a suitable technique in teaching grammar.

I.5 Scope and Limitation

In this study, the writer limits her topic about the tenses. She only discusses and conducts her way in teaching present progressive tense for the fourth grade of elementary students. The reason is because the fourth grade of elementary students will just be taught about present progressive tense in their English subject. And here, the writer wants to conduct her research when these students have no background knowledge at all about present progressive tense. So, they will learn present progressive tense by using humorous cartoon in their first time of learning tenses.

I.6 Theoretical Framework

Theories that are related to this study will be discussed in Chapter II that is the Review of the Related literature on page 8. The theory of grammar including tenses and present progressive tense; media that contains about visual aids, the kinds of picture (cartoons), the nature of cartoons, the criteria of good cartoons; and the nature of humor which has the definition of humor, the factors influencing humor, and the importance of humor in the teaching learning process will be exposed there.

I.7 Definition of Key Terms

Cartoon

- Cartoon is an amusing drawing or series of drawings in newspapers, etc. (Oxford Learner's Pocket Dictionary, 1955:58).

- A term used to include stand-alone illustrations, captioned or non-captioned, and short comic strip format (Doring, 1998)

Humor

Humor is generally defined as that quality of action, speech, or writing which excites amusement; the faculty or perceiving what is ludicrous or amusing or of expressing it in speech, writing, or other composition (Oxford English Dictionary, 1961:453).

Humorous Cartoon

Humorous cartoon is a funny picture that excites amusement or laughter which can be used for the purpose of the teaching aids.

Present Progressive tense

Present Progressive tense is used to express an activity that is *in progress at the moment of speaking*. It began in the recent past, is continuing at the present, and will probably end at some point in the future. (Azar, 1993:11)

I.8 Research Methods

The writer will use the experimental research in this study. It deals with the quantitative research. The result needs to be calculated with certain statistical calculation. It will be exposed further in chapter III.

I.9 Organization of the Thesis

In this study, the writer discusses about the Introduction in the first chapter. And the second chapter is The Review to the Related Literature. After that the Research Methodology will be exposed in the third chapter. Next, the Findings and the discussions the fourth chapter will be discussed. The last chapter is the Conclusion and Suggestion.