

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter explains the basic considerations in conducting this study. Also, this chapter is discussed about the research question, the research objective as the object of this research, the research significance or the benefit of this research, and the research limitations that have been thoroughly explained in this chapter.

Background of Study

Perception is a process of giving information that people have felt and experienced. The Merriam Webster dictionary (2019) described the definition of perception as “a result of observation, mental image, obsolete, consciousness, awareness of the elements of experience, quick acute, and intuitive cognition appreciation, a capacity of comprehension”. Based on the definition, three main points can be represented to explain the word perception. The first is perception is a result of observation. This sentence can be defined as perception is an outcome of something that has already been seen. In the second term that perception is awareness of the elements of experience, which means that perception is a constituent of people's experience. The last is perception is a capacity of comprehension, or implying the meaning, and perception is giving an idea for the item, way, or situation.

Based on the explanation above, perception liberates people to develop what they want to tell. Moreover, people can feel free to say their opinion about what they have been seen, felt, and experienced. As the result, everyone can give a perception to an object that they want. For instance, in a learning activity.

Students can give their perception of English learning. Students' perception is one of the important parts in improving students' understanding of learning. Remali, Zulkhepli, Selavathy, Sanusi, and Aris (2015, p.1) stated that students' perception is more important than lecturers' towards the teaching methods to support students' ability to understand learning. The teacher might think the method that they have taught is the best and can be accepted by the students. However, students have a different background of knowledge and students have their own way of learning. In other words, students have their own perception of learning.

In the English teaching activity in Universitas Negeri Gorontalo, particularly in the English Department, there are several subjects of English learning are applied, such as Intensive Course, Advance English Grammar, Basic English Grammar. There are also Speaking skills, Writing skills, Reading skills, Listening skills, Cross-Cultural Understanding, Literature, and Linguistics. All of the courses mentioned above are some of the subjects in supporting English learning, and demand the students to be able to speak and write in English. In speaking and writing, students should master how to use grammar to make the listener and the reader understand what they speak and write. According to Dalil&Harrizi (2013, p.5) grammar is "the mental system of rules and categories that allow humans to form and interpret the words and sentences of their language.". Therefore, it is important for students to understand grammar.

In the speaking skill, students should deliver their words clearly and understandable in order to make the hearer understand their speech. However, the students can cause misunderstanding to the hearer if they still confuse about how

to use grammar. In writing skills, the students should be able to arrange the sentence clearly to make the reader understand, so they need the knowledge of grammar rules to arrange their writing. To support the statement, Mart (2013, p.124) said that the grammar will make the writing organizing properly and establish communication to be more effective and meaningful. Moreover, there are two courses which central to all English learning in the English department. These subjects are one of the important things to achieve the goals of the other courses, they are Basic English Grammar and Advanced English Grammar.

In Basic English Grammar and Advanced English Grammar, students are taught about the rules of grammar. These two courses are taught in the second and third semester. Moreover, based on the syllabus of Basic English Grammar and advance English grammar that the researcher found, the teaching of grammar in Universitas Negeri Gorontalo uses deductive and inductive learning, specifically in the Advanced English Grammar subject. Moreover, in the subject of Basic English Grammar, the method used in the teaching of English Grammar was explicit teaching.

According to Thornburry (1999, p.29) the deductive approach is the application of rules that begin with the presentation of rules and followed by examples. While the inductive approach starts with a few examples and the students will give their opinion about the example that the teacher has given. It can be said that the deductive teaching in grammar refers to the teacher as the center, while the inductive teaching method demand the students to be more active in the class. Likewise, Ellis (2009, p.3) writes in his book about the

teaching divided into two. The first is implicit learning, this process of teaching does not need students' attention. The second is explicit learning as the opposite of implicit learning which means it does not demand students' attention in class.

Moreover, not only the technique of teaching grammar, but there are also teaching styles that the lecturer can use in applying the teaching grammar inductively, deductively, implicitly, or explicitly. One of the teaching style is playing games. The lecturers can use games during the learning process to overcome students' boredom in class and make students interested in the learning activity. Moreover, the lecturer can also put some humor or joke while teaching, so that students can easily remember what they have learned and will long last in their memories so they will not forget it easily. Abdulmajeed and Hameed (2017) stated that applying humor in grammar learning can help students understand the most difficult topics and can help students to remember the rules of grammar (p. 40).

The explanation about the method of teaching grammar above has been discussed in some of the previous studies. The research is about students' perception of teaching grammar and how grammar should be taught. For instance, the research by Stardy in 2011 with the title "A Study of Students' Perceptions of Learning English.". This study was collected from 127 students from two different universities namely Atmajaya University and Bunda Mulia University, specifically students who are taking grammar classes in English Department. This study was collected by using questionnaire randomly from two different universities to find out the importance of teaching grammar. There are a few

findings from the research. The research shows that teaching grammar is important, it should be taught deductively, the grammar should be taught intensively, the grammar should be taught in a long duration, and the students agree that the grammar should be taught combined with other skills.

A similar study about students' perception is also conducted in 2015 by Pazaver and Wang. The research used a qualitative method, namely by surveying participants. The participants of this study are 16 students from Asian countries. The findings revealed that although the Asian students' came from similar cultural and educational backgrounds, their perceptions of form-focused instruction varied widely. Their different perspectives were based on their previous language learning experiences, language proficiency, current academic needs, and future career choices. The result of the research showed that the information has a significant value for a teacher to fulfill students' needs in the classroom.

The same study regarding students' perceptions about learning English grammar is also conducted by Marlina, Sri, and Pujasari (2016). The research was conducted on 40 third semester students at Siliwangi University. In addition, this research was using mix method to find out the importance of learning grammar and the roles of grammar in speaking and writing. As the result of this study, the researcher found that the students thought that grammar has an important role in speaking and writing because grammar can help the listener and the reader to understand what the speaker and writer tried to convey. Also, by the students perception the researcher find out the strategy of learning grammar appropriate with the students need.

All the result of the research above is to find out how to study grammar easily, in order to make the students understand and know the use of grammar so the objective of studying it can be obtained by the students. However, in this current study, when the researcher was doing a pre-observation in the class of 2016 and some of the students in the class of 2015 and 2014 of the English Department, Universitas Negeri Gorontalo, the phenomenon shows that there are still many students that do not understand the grammar. They also can not use the grammar properly when they speak and write. Some students in the English Department said that learning grammar is hard, difficult, and confusing even the method of teaching that the lecture used is the best method for teaching grammar. However, some said that grammar is easy, but they are just confused about how to apply it in their writing and speaking. On the other hand, there are students said that they understand the system of grammar, but they do not know how to use it in their writing or speaking.

According to the explanation above, this research examined why this phenomenon happens in the English Department, what problem the students face when they were studying grammar in the second and third semester. This research aims to get the results of the needs of students in learning grammar in the English Department, by analyzing students' perception about the teaching of grammar in the third semester. This study exists because the result of the four previous study that has explained above, only discuss whether the teaching of grammar is important or not, grammar should be taught explicit, implicit, deductive, or inductive, and how grammar should be taught in the class. But there are no

researchers tried to consider about what happened after those findings applied in the teaching activity. Does the method work properly? Are all the students' need in learning grammar complied? Is the way of applying the method in the right way? By interviewing the students of the English Department in Gorontalo State University, the researcher will find out the answer to these questions.

Research Question

From the background of study explained above, the formulated research question is "How is students' perception on the teaching of English grammar in the English Department?"

Research Objective

The purpose of this research is to find out the students perception of grammar in the English Department of Universitas Negeri Gorontalo. Moreover, the researcher wants to analysed the learning process that occurs related to the teaching method and the way the lecturer gives the lessons in the teaching of grammar in the English Department. In addition, the researcher wants to indicate students' need in learning grammar by their perception.

Research Limitation

This research focuses on students' perceptions or students' opinions about teaching grammar in the third semester in English Grammar courses. Therefore, the information about the perception of the participant only focuses on the class of 2018 at Universitas Negeri Gorontalo. The students in the class of 2018 are the students that already passed the Basic English Grammar and Advanced English

Grammar. The perception of teaching grammar in the English department is conducted by seeing the students' perception.

Research Significant

The significance of this research is to find out the students' need in learning grammar. Also, this research contributed to the Faculty of Letter and Culture, specifically for the lecturer in the English Department. This research can be the suggestion for the lecturer to determine what is the steps need to be taken next to make the grammar teaching activity better. The learning process can be more directed because it suits the needs of students' based on their perceptions.