

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of The Study

Linguistics is one of the studies in English learning. Payne (2011) writes that Linguistics consists of several elements that can be learned, namely words, phrases, and clauses. Therefore, learning linguistics must be carried out stage by stage based on the sequence of the study. It aims to make students more focus on each element of linguistics that bring them to comprehend the whole study of linguistics.

The study of linguistics is commonly taught based on the branches of Linguistics. Therefore, in the process of learning, the learners must be familiarized with four different levels sign that the language is constituted; phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantic. These levels are taught sequentially from phonology to semantic. In addition, all levels are considered difficult for English learners because they often study the language immediately. One of the most difficult levels is syntax because basically syntax is a branch of linguistics that studies how words are put together into sentences.

According to Carnie (2013) "Syntax studies the level of Language that lies between words and the meaning of utterances: sentences. It is the level that mediates between sounds that someone produces (organized into words) and what they intend to say." (p. 4). From that explanation, it can be seen that syntax can be defined as a study of a sentence in which the sentence consists of several phrases. Therefore, it can be said that syntax is a study that focuses on sentence structure,

from words to phrases and phrases into sentences. On the other hand, there is a term that students will learn when studying syntax, namely transformational grammar.

According to Fowler (2017), Transformational grammar is the rules of sentence structure which aims to analyze the meaning behind a sentence structure. Likewise generative grammar, he also explains that generative grammar can be a transformational grammar in the modern generative. On the other hand, generative grammar cannot be transformational grammar because basically, transformational grammar refers to certain types of rules, while generative grammar may not use transformational rules. Additionally, there are two levels of transformational grammar; deep structure and surface structure.

The relationship between syntax, semantic, and phonology is a way that can be used to compare the differences between deep structure and surface structure. According to Fowler (2017) "deep structure relates to meaning; surface structure relates to the order of elements, and hence to sound, for in effect the surface structure determines the sequence of sounds which occurs in a phonetic realization of a sentence." (p. 10). Therefore, the deep structure is related to semantic while the surface structure is related to phonology, but both of them are discussed in sentence structure. On the other hand, Fowler (2017) also describes about transformational rules where "Transformational rules apply to underlying phrase-markers to give derived or superficial phrase-markers." (p. 15). So, deep structure and surface structure can be represented by phrase-markers. A phrase marker is a way to represent the constituent in a sentence using a tree diagram.

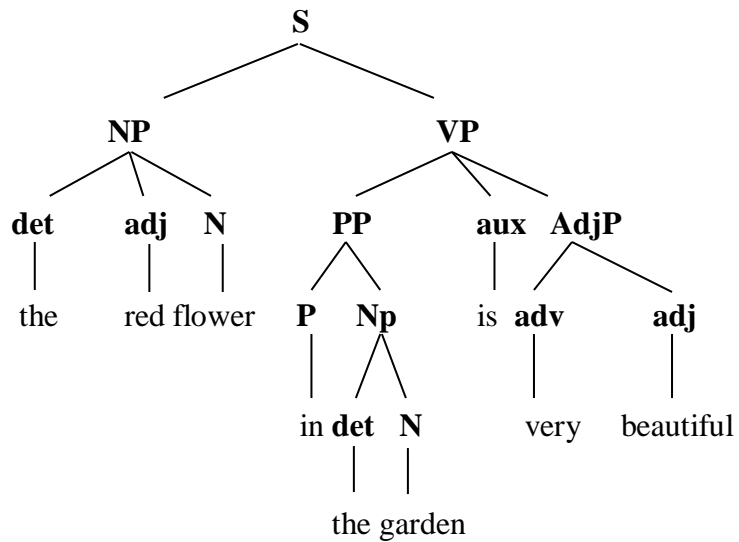
In syntax, a tree diagram serves as a way that can be used by students to see the structure of a sentence, because a good sentence is a structured sentence. Therefore, the ability to draw syntactic tree diagrams can be used to check how the structure of a sentence is made by students, so the students will be more careful in forming a sentence in writing because basically forming structured sentences requires certain patterns and rules.

In learning syntax, many students said that drawing tree diagram is very difficult. It is stated based on the preliminary observation made by the researcher. So, the researcher conducted an observation to the students of the English Department. Based on the observation, the researcher obtained statements from few students that syntax is easier than other branches of linguistics. In contrast, most of students said that syntax is the most difficult subject which causes the low score they achieve. Besides, they also said that when they do the syntax test during the exam, they have difficulty in solving it and prefer to leave the answers blank. So, from those explanations, it can be concluded that there are only few students who say that syntax is easy, but most of them say that syntax is a difficult subject. On the other hand, the researcher also gave a simple sentence and asked some students to draw a tree diagram based on the sentence. It aims to measure how much they understand to draw a tree diagram of a simple sentence in which it is an easy sentence of other kinds of sentence that only consists of subject, predicate, and object. The following is the given example of simple sentence:

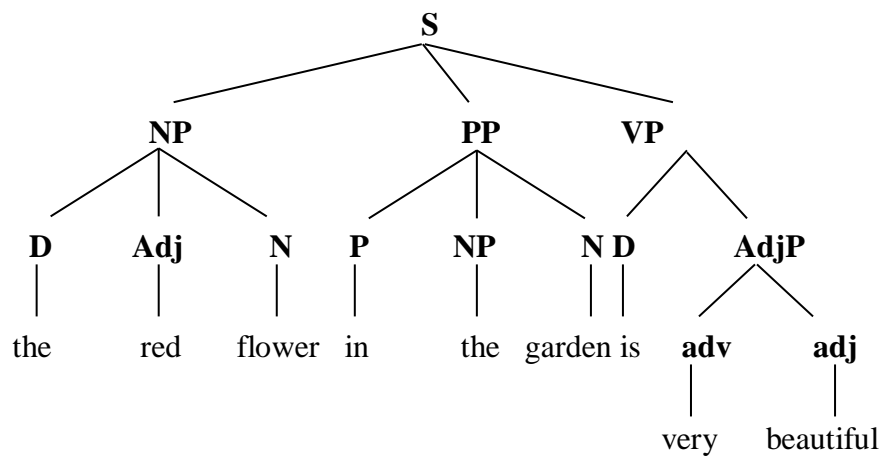
The red flower in the garden is very beautiful.

From the sentence above, the researcher asked students to draw a tree diagram, the students' answers are as follow:

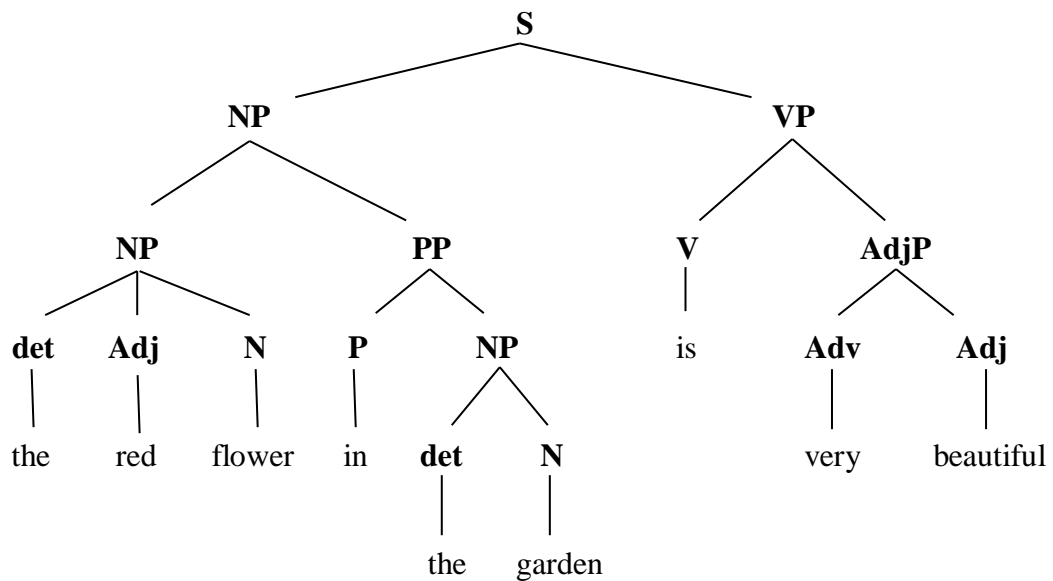
The red flower in the garden is very beautiful



The red flower in the garden is very beautiful



The good answer is as follow:



Based on the preliminary observation, it seems that there are difficulties faced by students when drawing syntactic tree diagrams of the simple sentence. The first and second tree diagram shows that the students have difficulty to put prepositional phrase. In addition, the student also has difficulty in determining auxiliary verb. It can be seen in the second tree diagram, the student determine word “is” as determiner.

Additionally, the rules about the sentence structure have been studying by students in the fifth semester of the syntax course. Based on the observations that the researcher has done, there are many students who still think that the syntax course is very difficult, especially when drawing the tree diagram. Therefore, it makes the researcher interested to conduct the research about students' difficulties in drawing the syntactic tree diagram, the researcher wants to know about what

are the difficulties often faced by students when they are drawing the syntactic tree diagram of simple sentences.

Furthermore, this research can also be useful for readers, especially for students and lecturers. For students, this research can be read and used as motivation to be more enthusiastic in learning syntax and also pay more attention to what is explained by the lecturer about syntax material, because many students say that syntax course is very difficult, especially in drawing the syntactic tree diagram. On the other hand, this research can also be useful for lecturers to make them more realize that there are many students who still have difficulty to learn syntax course. Therefore, the lecturers can pay close attention to the students in the class and find suitable approach or strategy of learning that make the students easily understand about the material of syntax.

Some researchers conducted the research in the same area (syntactic tree diagram); Derrick & Archambault (2009) analyzed TreeForm: explaining and exploring grammar through syntax trees. The research focused on the treeform as a tool to develop the syntax trees, complete with movement lines, coreference, and feature association. So in the research, the researcher asked several students and professors to draw a tree diagram using a treeform. Besides that, the researcher also asked them to draw a tree diagram using other tools. After that, the researcher analyzed the results by comparing the effectiveness of those tools. Therefore, the research aims to determine whether treeform is effective for developing tree diagrams. The other previous research is investigating the problems and suggestions with the same area in the tree diagram. Wang (2010)

investigated the problem with the title “Drawing Tree Diagrams: Problems and Suggestions.” From the title, it can be seen that the researcher wanted to know the general problems that often occur when students draw tree diagrams. The research was conducted by reviewing the students’ exam sheets and analyzing the problems that often occur when drawing tree diagrams. Next, Christianto (2018) investigated the research about syntactic analysis on sentence patterns in John Denver’s song lyrics. The research is conducted in John Denver's song lyrics by analyzed the lyrics and knowing the sentence patterns. Besides that, the research also using syntactic analysis especially tree diagrams to find out the result. The researcher analyzed the data using a tree diagram, after that the researcher determined the sentence pattern based on the tree diagram.

The difference between this research and the previous researches is based on the focus of each research. The first research focused to know whether treeform effective for developing tree diagram. The second research, it focused on the general problems that students faced when they are drawing tree diagram. The last research focused on finding the sentence patterns using a tree diagram. In comparison, this research focuses on students’ difficulties in drawing syntactic tree diagrams of simple sentences.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher is interested to analyze the students’ difficulties in drawing the syntactic tree diagram of simple sentences especially in students who have studied syntax in the fifth semester, it is sixth-semester students of English Department.

Research Question

Based on the basic consideration above, the question of this research is:

What are the students' difficulties in drawing the syntactic tree diagram of simple sentences?

The Aim of The Study

This study aims to identify the students' difficulties in drawing the syntactic tree diagram of simple sentences so that the readers can take useful knowledge from this study.

Significance of The Study

A syntactic tree diagram is important to see whether the sentences are structured or unstructured because it can affect the meaning of the sentences. Sometimes, unstructured sentences have different meanings from structured sentences because structured sentences are using good grammar. Therefore, using syntactic tree diagram can be useful to see the structure of the sentence. In addition, a lot of students say that drawing the syntactic tree diagram is difficult. So, the results of this study are expected to give a contribution to syntax lecturers, students, and further researchers.

First, from the result of this study, the syntax lecturers can use this study as the guideline to know the students' difficulties in drawing the syntactic tree diagram of simple sentences. On the other hand, through this study, the syntax lecturers also can find out what caused the students' difficulties in drawing the syntactic tree diagram so that the syntax lecturers can do the learning exploration

to find the best method in teaching syntax. It aims to minimize the students' difficulties in drawing the syntactic tree diagram of simple sentences.

Second, the result of this study also can minimize the students' difficulties in drawing the syntactic tree diagram through the students' awareness about their ability in drawing the syntactic tree diagram so that the students can understand how to overcome their difficulties well.

Third, this study can be a reference for the further researcher who is interested to conduct the research with the same point.

Scope of The Study

This study focuses on the students' difficulties in drawing syntactic tree diagrams of simple sentences. The researcher asked the students to draw the syntactic tree diagram of simple sentences and also gave some questions in the interview section for the sixth-semester students of the English Department. Besides, the researcher took 6 students of the English Department as participants, because it is enough for the researcher to find the results of this study.