

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The background of the research detailed the context in which the study took place. It highlighted previous studies and established the relevance of the topic, demonstrating the gaps that warranted further exploration.

A. Background of the Research

In Indonesia, English lessons had been taught in general education at every level of school. English language learning was one of the subjects that students needed to complete in order to graduate from schools and universities. At the college level, English had been a conditional subject for every major. This information revealed that the English subject had become an important element of the Indonesian education sector.

Meanwhile, in the process of learning English, there were several skills that students needed to master, such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Those skills represented the individual standards that had to be mastered when learning the English language. In line with that, Brown (1994) stated that in English language teaching, the four skills listening, speaking, reading, and writing were the most important, and all of them supported each other. Furthermore, learning English needed to be supported by language components. Pincas (2003) stated that in Indonesia, English had to be taught because it played an important role in national and social life. As one of the compulsory subjects that students were required to

master, they needed to comprehend the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, while the language components dealt with grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation.

Grammar was an important aspect to learn in a language like English. It helped students understand and construct correct sentences. To construct sentences, students had to know the classes of words and how to use them correctly in a sentence. They needed to understand, pay attention, and practice more in the language. In addition, English and Indonesian had different messages in grammar structure. Greenbaum and Nelson (2002) defined grammar as the set of rules that allowed people to combine words in their language into larger units. Whenever they spoke or wrote, they always operated according to grammar rules in combining words into larger units. Grammar rules helped people better comprehend what someone spoke or wrote. People would misunderstand when they ignored grammatical rules. For example, tense really affected writing. If writers forgot to change the verb into the appropriate tense, readers would be confused about when or what the writer meant, leading to misunderstandings about the sentences created.

In this case, the researcher only took one part of the grammar, namely personal pronouns. Personal pronouns had a very important role. The absence of one of them could lead to the wrong meaning in a paragraph or even in the whole text. This was because personal pronouns always referred to nouns, so they were interconnected with each other. According to Djajasudharma (2010), pronouns could function as

nominal and could replace the position of nouns; therefore, the pronouns had to be adjusted to the context to avoid ambiguity or irregularity in language. Thus, students needed to learn about personal pronouns because they were the basic material that students had to master.

Based on preliminary observations that had been conducted by the researcher, students at SMP Al Irsad, especially in the eighth grade, were still confused about when to use personal pronouns versus nouns and the complexity of English pronouns compared to Indonesian pronouns.

Based on these reasons, the researcher conducted a study to analyze the students' competence in using pronouns under the title “**An Analysis of Students' Competence in Using Pronouns.**”

B. Scope of the Research

Based on this background, the researcher focused on analyzing students' competence in using pronouns, specifically in the use of subject and object pronouns.

C. Statement of the Research

Based on the discussion above, the researcher wanted to formulate the problem in the following question: What is the students' competence in using personal pronouns at SMP Al-Irsyad Junior High School?

D. Objective of the Research

The purpose of this study was to find out the students' competence in using personal pronouns at SMP Al Irsad.

E. Significance of the Research

1. Theoretically

The researcher hoped that the results of this study would be useful for all readers, so they could gain information and knowledge about the ability to use pronouns in learning English.

2. Pratically

The results of this study were expected to be useful for students, teachers, and also prospective researchers.

a) For students, it was hoped that it could contribute to learning English, especially the use of personal pronouns, so that they could understand them well and use them in their English communication.

b) For teachers, the results of this study were expected to provide input for English teachers in developing their professionalism in teaching personal pronouns.

c) For other researchers, the researcher hoped that this study would be useful for improving knowledge and skills, especially in using personal pronouns as prospective English teachers.