

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study is intended to investigate learners' belief about learning grammar that committed by English department major students in one of the Islamic higher education in Southeast Sulawesi. This chapter depicts the background of the study, the scope of the study, the research questions, and the purpose of the study. Moreover, it includes the significance of the study, and the definition of the key terms used in this study.

1.1 Background of the Study

The concept of belief has become the focus of research in the world of education. In addition, beliefs about language learning may contain some personal assessment values of each person (Vibulpol, 2004). Puchta (1999) states that belief is a cause and effect relationship and it influences our thinking about the environment around us. Belief can play an important and significant role in determining behavior and thought which is why students' beliefs related to language learning become important. This is a kind of proposition that a person can consciously or unconsciously have and is also evaluative because it is accepted as true by the person who holds it (Borg, 2001). These pre-existing beliefs play an important role to form teachers and researchers' behaviors and practices in teaching process (Incecay & Dollar, 2011). According to Davis (2003) beliefs held by language learners can provide useful insights and enlighten students' thought processes and behaviors related to language learning. All

students, especially older ones have very strong beliefs, usually based on prior learning experiences, and opinions on how instructions should be conveyed.

Beliefs about language learning have become one of researchers' interests in the field of second language acquisition. Several studies have been carried out in the last two decades to examine beliefs about language learning from various groups of second language learners and EFL learners (Peacock, 1999; Ebrahimi et al., 2015; Sogutlu, 2016). In another study, Male (2011) examined the opinion of EFL students about the teaching of English grammar. He used a questionnaire for data collection. The findings of the study showed that most of the students saw grammar important in learning English. They report that grammar is important in writing, but is not as important in speaking. Also, the students seemed to like explicit instruction more than implicit instruction in learning English grammar.

According to Horwitz (1988) Teachers can gain better understanding of learners' expectations and satisfaction with their language classes by having the knowledge of learners' beliefs. In line with Lightbown & Spada (2013) Research has shown that learners' belief can be an influential factor in their learning experiences in the classroom. Studying learners' beliefs can help teachers set appropriate teaching strategies and develop greater flexibility in their application.

In Indonesian context, there also some researchers who are aware with learner beliefs study; Amrullah et al., (2017) they studied about Language learning beliefs of Indonesian English education study program students. They conducted the study at Sriwijaya University Sumatra. Iswati (2020) investigated the learners' beliefs in learning English. There also those who took different

subject that is Putrawan et al., (2019) A study on EFL learners belief about translation as a learning strategy in Indonesia. However, the grammar learning in IAIN Kendari taking place during three semesters from first until third semester English Education Department. The learning process started from part of speech until tenses. This research is necessary to know the students' perceptions in learning grammar.

Although many studies have so far been conducted on learners belief all over the world including Indonesian contexts, many researchers focus on language learning; but there are still not researchers who study about grammar especially in Kendari context. This study is more significant on learners' beliefs and attitudes towards grammar skill. This research is so important to be done in order that teacher or lecturer can set appropriate teaching strategies in teaching grammar.

1.2 The Scope of the Study

The scopes of the study focus on learners' beliefs about learning grammar. The data collections for this study will use students' responses based on their learning experiences while learning grammar in first, second and third semester.

1.3 Research Question

Based on the focus of the study that has mentioned above, researcher formulates research question "What are EFL learners' beliefs about learning grammar?"

1.4 Purposes of the Study

Based on the research question, this present study was aiming to find out EFL learners' beliefs about grammar.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The result of this study are expects to spell out the frequency of beliefs that committed by students from English major in grammar subject. It is also hoped to help students to strenghten their perception of grammar, knowing the importance of learning grammar, and how to improve students grammar knowledge.

This study is attempted to contribute to the body of knowledge already exist in this field, both theoretically and practically. At the theoretical level, this study expected can be used as references for those who want to conduct research in investigate learners' beliefs about grammar. At the practical level, this study is expected to help teachers or lecturers knowing students belief of the importance of learning grammar and how to improve students grammar knowledge. As a result teacher can set appropriate teaching strategies in teaching grammar.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

This part is aimed to define some important terms in this study as in the following:

English as Foreign Language (EFL) Learners: EFL Students is a name for those who are learning English but not for their first or second language. They learn English as an additional language because they live in non-English country. In the field case, EFL students was English Education Department of IAIN Kendari who took grammar class in their second semester. Student's first language is Indonesian and their second language is their culture language however, in some cases there also students who are use their culture language as their mother tongue and Indonesian as second language.

Beliefs: Beliefs are attitudes shown by humans when they feel they know enough and conclude that they have reached the truth. Because belief is an attitude, then one's beliefs are not always true or mere beliefs are not guarantees of truth. Beliefs can easily change even without deliberate intervention because we are always surrounded by and exposed to various stimuli that can have the potential to change our beliefs, both inside and outside the classroom (Kamiya, 2018).

Learning Grammar: Learning grammar means the study how words are constructed in sentence well, when the pattern of grammar is used appropriately and how the sentence will be interprets correctly. It assumed that it is not only the way that contains a set of rules to make good sentence but also it tell about the system and pattern in selecting and combining word. It also tells about construction of sentence.

