

## CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of the Study

English is an international language, needs to be taught for the development of science and technology, culture and also the relationship between countries in this world. It plays an important role for special function like education, science, technology, and other fields of life. Because of the importance of English, it needs to give special attention to the English teaching learning.

Learning English is very important for everyone in order to be able to communicate with other people in the world. For this, everyone is demanded to be able to understand English, either written or spoken. Language used to communicate for doing social interaction. It means that language is said to be social characteristic. Language is a system of communication in speech and writing used by people of a particular group or nation for example English Language, Indonesian Language.<sup>1</sup> Language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols used for human communication<sup>2</sup>. There are many languages in the world. One of them is English. Quran verse Ar-Rum: 22 say that:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ خَلْقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَخْتِلَافَ أَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَالْوَالِدَاتِ  
إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٢٢﴾

“And among His Signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the variations in your languages and your colors: verily in that are Signs for those who know”.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Oxford Learner’s Pocket Dictionary, third edition, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 240.

<sup>2</sup>Ronald Wadhaugh, *Introduction To Linguistics*. University of Michigan: Mc Graw-Hill book company, 1972, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup>Yusuf Ali Translation, *The Holy Quran*, retrieved from: [http://www.harunyahya.com/Quran\\_translation/Quran\\_translation30.php](http://www.harunyahya.com/Quran_translation/Quran_translation30.php)(accessed on December 4<sup>th</sup> 2010)

In Indonesia, English is as a foreign language, English has been taught in many levels of schools, kindergarten, elementary, junior high school, senior high school even university. Although English has been taught for long time, the result is still considered unsatisfactory.<sup>4</sup> English has four skills that consist of reading, listening, writing and speaking.

Ideally, four of them have to be mastered by someone who teach and learn English because English is a key to interact with people in the world. English is not Indonesian native language; therefore, it is very difficult for Indonesian students to learn. Besides that, Indonesian and English are not related languages; therefore, so many different elements found in them cause difficulties for Indonesian students. At school, they only get grammatical rules explanation. They rarely communicate using the target language because they have less ability in English. Many people complain about the poor English mastery of senior high school graduates though they have studied it for three years. In this condition Ramelan explains:

“The failure of our English instruction can be explained by the following possibilities: either there is something wrong with the teacher because they know little about the principles of foreign language teaching, or the material is not suitable for Indonesian students”.<sup>5</sup>

In line with the difficulties of learning English, the English teaching is also difficult. To get a maximum result, English teachers have to try hard to pay attention on developing their own mastery of English, their students' linguistic competence and the method of teaching English.

In teaching learning process, teachers play a more important role than parents do. They should be creative to select teaching media and techniques to draw students' interest and motivation in learning English. The teachers are demanded to choose the appropriate one of media to make the class fresh and

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<sup>4</sup>Ramelan, *Linguistics and Its Contribution to Language Teacher*, (Semarang: IKIP Semarang Press, 1991), p.3.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, p.2.

interesting. In addition, the students can be happy and will not get bored learning English, especially in learning grammar.

The teachers' creativity in using teaching media will increase the probability of mastering the grammar so the students more enjoy, understand and interest in learning teaching process. Mary Finocchiaro states:

“There can be no question that given students with some interest in language learning, it is what we as teachers do-to promote a friendly environment in the classroom; to create and organize materials; to overcome shortcomings in our textbooks; to stimulate and maintain interest through varied practice activities.”<sup>6</sup>

To teach English language, teachers usually use certain method of teaching. However, based on the historical perspective, language teaching methods change throughout history. These changes depend on the proficiency that the learner need, such as a move toward oral proficiency rather than reading comprehension as the goal of language study. Therefore, any appropriate methods of language teaching should be used in order to find more effective ways of teaching English.

Learning English is not easy for Indonesian learners. One of the obstacles that they generally face is the grammar or the language rules. On the other hand, they have to encounter it because it is one the compulsory lessons in school from the elementary level to the highest one.

The success of learners in acquiring their second language is influenced by some factors, which is one of them is the grammatical mastery of the target language. As asserted by Chomsky cited by Steinberg, one of the fundamental language ability should be possessed by people in order to be able to communicate is the ability to produce and comprehend grammatical sentence.<sup>7</sup> It means that the grammatical aspect becomes one of the essential requirements for people, in this case especially for Indonesian learners, to be able to communicate. The language which is produced may become more

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<sup>6</sup>Mary Finocchiaro, *English as a Second Language: From Theory to Practice*, (USA:Regent Publishing.Inc,1974), p.99.

<sup>7</sup>Danny D. Steinberg et al, *Psycholinguistics: Language, Mind and World*, (London: Longman, 2001), 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed, p. 345.

accurate and meaningful when they communicate in grammatical sentences. Lack of knowledge especially about construction of sentences, for example; the incorrect use of verbs and tenses is the main deficiency of the students. Most of them find themselves incapable of expressing their thought in English and that is why the leaning of grammar becomes the most difficult subject for them. This situation requires a change, especially in students' attitude and the teaching learning practice in class.

The heterogeneous students can also be a hindrance which may be faced by teacher when he or she teaches in classroom because every student has different level of language competence. In this case, the teacher is faced with the students whose characteristics and competences are different and varieties. Therefore, he or she should determine what method should be used or applied in classroom when she or he teaches English, especially in teaching grammar, in order to be able to accommodate them effectively. Moreover, the teaching of grammar is generally felt boring and even confusing for learners because it needs more analytical ability. Another opinion stating about grammar is that grammar is notorious for its collection system of boring and meaningless form. It may be said, the way grammar is learnt will determine whether grammar is something boring, complicated or meaningless.

On the other hand, the demand of 2004 curriculum stating that English learners should achieve main competence that is discourse competence. This competence is based on the model of competence promoted by Celce Murcia et. al. that is communicative competence. These competence states that if one gets involved in communication either written or orally, he or she also gets involved in a discourse. At this point, in order to reach that level of competence, English learners should possess its supporting competences that are linguistic, actional, sociocultural, and strategic competence. The relevance of grammar teaching learning to those curriculum competences is that the aspect of grammar is placed on one of them that is in linguistic competence.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, *Kurikulum 2004: Standar Kompetensi Bahasa Inggris SMA dan MA*, (Jakarta: Pusat Kurikulum, Balitbang Depdiknas, 2006), p. 6-7.

In addition, according to Hallyday if one thinks about language, there are three important aspects that should be considered; contexts, texts, and language system. Here, language system plays important role because it influences the communication. The negligent of using grammar in communication causes miscommunication and serious impact on communication. Thus, the curriculum plays important role in emphasizing the grammar mastery.<sup>9</sup>

The researcher's consideration in carrying out this research is based on the view that grammar is an essential component of language, so it is important to find and apply a method to teach it effectively. As stated in verse 24 of Surah Abraham that learning grammar is very important aspect to language acquisition.

أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ ضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا كَلِمَةً طَيِّبَةً  
 كَشَجَرَةٍ طَيِّبَةٍ أَصْلُهَا ثَابِتٌ وَفَرْعُهَا فِي السَّمَاءِ ﴿٢٤﴾<sup>10</sup>

“Have you not seen how God sets forth a parable? A goodly word like a goodly tree, whose root is firmly fixed and its branches (reach) to the heavens.”<sup>11</sup>

Actually, this verse can be put in language teaching context which states that learning of language grammar is important in order to make the communication more understandable. “A goodly word” can be inferred with producing the language accurately and appropriately. The place of grammar is considered as fundamental factors, parable with the root of tree, which is firmly fixed in the ground. It means that one should possess the basic knowledge of grammar in order to be able to communicate grammatically.

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<sup>9</sup>Ahmad Sofyan, *Panduan pengajaran KBK Mata Pelajaran Bahasa Inggris untuk SMA dan MA*, (Jakarta: CV sandika Corp., 2003), p. 14-17.

<sup>10</sup>Al Quran Online , retrieved from: <http://www.dudung.net/quran-online/indonesia/14/20>(Accessed on May, 12 2010)

<sup>11</sup>Yusuf Ali, *The Holy Quran Yusuf Ali Translation*, retrieved from [http://www.harunyahya.com/Quran\\_translation/Quran\\_translation14.php](http://www.harunyahya.com/Quran_translation/Quran_translation14.php) (accessed on May, 12 2010)

Grammar is a total set of signals which given language expresses its meaning or the total of structure of the language.<sup>12</sup> The teacher should give students new methods in order to make them enjoyable, easy and memorable about the material especially grammar.

Among several methods of teaching English, this study interested in the use of songs as one of the language teaching techniques. Teachers should motivate their students so that students will find language learning as a pleasurable and relaxed activity. In addition, they can help their students by giving practice in language while keeping the class lively and interesting. Those characteristics basically can be found when songs are used in class. In this study, the writer uses song for improving students' mastery of simple past tense.

A Song is a work of art which can be enjoyed by anyone. As mentioned by some experts who provide their view that song is "Music for the voice".<sup>13</sup> Another definition, song is a short musical work set to a poetic text with equal importance given to music and to the words. It may be written for one or several voices and is generally performed with instrument accompaniment.<sup>14</sup> Song is also defined as "short and usually simple piece of music for voice, with or without instrumental accompaniment".<sup>15</sup>

The teacher should give students new methods in order to make them enjoyable, easy and memorable about the material especially grammar. In this case, the writer wants to introduce the new method in learning grammar (simple past tense) by English song as teaching media. The researcher will introduce the method to students of MAN 02 Pekalongan by conducting a research in title "THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHING SIMPLE PAST TENSE BY USING THE MEDIUM OF ENGLISH SONGS" (An

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<sup>12</sup>Robbert, P. *Understanding English*, Conell University Harper and Row Publisher. New York, p. 132.

<sup>13</sup>AS Hornby, *Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary of Current English* (New York : Oxford University Press, 1974),p. 822.

<sup>14</sup>Encyclopedia, *Encyclopedia Americana*, 1977, p. 220.

<sup>15</sup>Concise Encyclopedia, [http://www.Answers.Com/Britannia\\_concise\\_encyclopedia/song](http://www.Answers.Com/Britannia_concise_encyclopedia/song). (Accessed on January 27th 2010).

Experimental study at the XI Grade of MAN 2 Pekalongan in the Academic Year of 2010/2011).

## **B. Reasons for Choosing the Topic**

There are many reasons the researcher chooses the topic, they are:

1. The exposure of grammar in English teaching learning is considerably important because it becomes pre-communicative activity which can contribute to the students' accuracy. Meanwhile there is still students' viewpoint stating that English grammar is one of the language items which is notorious for its intricacy.
2. Senior high school students need more interesting ways for learning grammar.
3. A teaching-learning process needs media to make the lesson well. Media can be used as a recreational and enjoyment and songs are a good media for doing that. So it is important to find out how teach using media.
4. The students regard English as a threatening subject. By using songs that provide playful and no-pressure environment, the writer hopes the students are interested in studying English as fun as possible.
5. The use of music in the classroom can make the entire learning process more enjoyable and can stimulate "right" brain learning.<sup>16</sup>

## **C. Research Questions**

The problem in this study can be state as follows:

1. How effective is English songs as medium to teach simple past?
2. How are the students' simple past achievements in experimental and control groups before and after the treatment?

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<sup>16</sup>Beare, & Kenneth, *Music in the ESL Classroom*, (<http://esl.about.com/od/eslflteachingtechnique/a/brainmusic.htm>, 2008)

#### **D. Objectives of Study**

The objectives of the research are as follows:

1. To find out the effectiveness of English songs as medium to teach simple past tense.
2. To find out the students' simple past achievement in experimental and control groups before and after the treatment.

#### **E. Limitation of the Study**

The scope of English study is so broad. The research may not be able to reach all the aspects to be studied as a whole. Particularly in English learning teaching context, there are so many components that may become the concern of the study such as the students, the textbook used, the materials, the process of teaching and learning, etc. Thus, the boundary of this study specifies on the teaching simple past tense using English songs is more effective than teaching simple past tense without using English songs in the way for improving students' mastery of simple past tense made by year XI students of MAN 2 Pekalongan in the academic year 2010/2011.

#### **F. Significance of the Study**

The study about the use of English songs as a simple past tense teaching media hopefully will give contribution to English teaching and learning, they are:

1. To the students of MAN 2 Pekalongan

The students have to develop their understanding about simple past tense by doing many practices and songs that are interesting may help them.

2. To the teachers

The result of this study is expected to be a kind evaluation for teachers who frequently use monotonous media in teaching-learning activity. Hopefully, songs as an alternative media can be used in teaching simple past tense in the classroom so that the students are interested and more enthusiastic in learning English. And it can be applied as an approach by



using English songs as media to teach simple past tense and other grammar of language in senior high school.

3. To the Readers

The result of this study can be used as reference. It is hoped can give more information and contributes the knowledge.