

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the study

Language is an essential means of communication that holds significant importance in our lives. It is a fundamental system used by societies worldwide, enabling humans to effectively exchange information and strengthen social bonds. Without language, people would be unable to communicate with one another. With countless languages spoken across the globe, English has been adopted as the international language.

When it comes to learning English, there are various skills and components to consider, one of them is grammar. Grammar has long been recognized as a challenging aspect for students learning English as a foreign language. A solid grasp of grammar empowers students to create and edit written work, and language acquisition predominantly occurs through an unconscious process. Essentially, grammar encompasses a language's set of rules that govern the formation of every possible phrase. In essence, grammar focuses on the structure and analysis of sentences.

The importance of grammar as a fundamental language component for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers to focus

on.¹ It highlights that students often struggle with tenses and language structure, making it necessary for teachers to teach grammar rules to help students build grammatically correct sentences. Effective grammar competency is critical because it allows learners to communicate effectively with grammatical precision.

By using proper grammar, students can express themselves more passionately and meaningfully. Good grammar allows students to convey their ideas more effectively. On the other hand, students who lack grammar expertise can not construct sentences correctly, and they may not understand the meaning of sentences either. This can lead to communication breakdown and impact their ability to effectively interact with others.²

Grammar holds significant importance as a language skill and plays a vital role in enhancing students' proficiency in English by enabling them to utilize the language accurately. If students want to create a good sentence, they must understand how to grammatically arrange and form the words.

¹ Calanoga, M. C. M. (2019). Mechanics and Grammar Error Analysis in Students' Write-Ups: Basis for Incidental Teaching in the Classroom. *Asian EFL Journal*, 23(3.3), 104–125.

² Cam, L., & Tran, T. M. T. (2017). An Evaluation of using Games in Teaching English Grammar for First Year English-Majored Students at Dong Nai Technology University. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 16(7), 55–71.

Nowadays, many students struggle with constructing correct sentences in English, particularly in the case of conditional sentences. The complexity of learning conditional sentences has garnered significant attention. Several factors contribute to students' lack of understanding, including the intricate nature of English conditionals, which encompass both cognitive and linguistic aspects and involve a wide range of interpretations expressed through various linguistic structures. The difficulties primarily arise from the forms, meanings, and time-tense relationships inherent in conditional sentences.

While it has been suggested that the challenges and issues related to conditionals stem from the interplay between meaning (temporal and hypothetical situations) and form (verb form), it is essential to explore these relationships and their frequent recurrence in conditional sentences. However, the inadequacy of teaching methods exacerbates these difficulties, as traditional approaches fail to engage students and establish meaningful connections to real-life situations.

To address this issue, it is crucial to incorporate relatable daily life concepts and examples when teaching conditional sentences. By doing so, teachers can enhance students' comprehension and motivation to learn. Furthermore, connecting the material to students' personal experiences fosters relevance and encourages independent exploration.

Employing effective teaching strategies that bridge the gap between abstract concepts and practical application is vital to improving students' understanding and proficiency in conditional sentences.

Three different types of conditional sentences will be produced as a result of the writing assessments used in this study. In the test, students are shown 20 pictures and asked to compose conditional phrases based on the situation described.

The test is intended to address frequent corrections that students make while generating conditional phrases, which the researcher will categorize and record in a table. Students' understanding and ability to create conditional sentences will be demonstrated by identifying these common modifications.

Not only that, in this study, student will have interviews to gain more information about what causes lie behind some of the difficulties they faced in constructing conditional sentences. Based on the condition above, the researcher interested in conducting the research entitle “ An Analysis of Students’ Ability In Constructing Conditional Sentences.”

B. Identification of The Problem

Based on the background above, the researcher concludes there are several factors that cause students' difficulty in using constructing conditional sentences. The first, students find challenges when making

deciding what type of conditional sentences that appropriate with the situation they faced and formula of type conditional sentences they use, use of verb tenses, use of modality, and word order. Also, researcher will take interview to gain information that maybe can be the reason lie behind difficulties that encounter by students.

C. Limitation of The Study

The focus of this study is the restricted construction ability of eleventh-grade students when it comes to conditional sentences (specifically type I, II, and III) at SMA Negeri 1 Waringinkurung.

D. Formulation of the Problem

The following list identifies the objectives of this study:

1. How is students' ability in constructing conditional sentences?
2. What is the most difficult part students faced in conditional sentence construction test and what can be improved?

E. Objective of Study

The following list identifies the objectives of this study:

1. To know students' ability in constructing conditional sentences
2. To find the most difficult part students faced in conditional sentences construction test and what can be improved

F. Significance of Study

The significances of the study are:

1. For students, to know their constructing ability on conditional sentences.
2. For English teachers, it is supposed that grammar will be more considered in the teaching learning process. In order to enhance students' comprehension of the concepts, it is recommended that the teacher offer a greater number of examples and exercises.
3. For Another Researcher, It is hoped by other researchers will be useful as a reference or comparisons for another researcher, when they have similar problem in their research.

G. Previous Study

Due to the importance of conditional sentences, some researchers did certain researches. In recent years, the study of conditional sentences has become a popular topic. Earlier research on this topic has been undertaken by several previous researchers.

First, An analysis of errors in conditional sentence constructions.³
This study investigated the errors made by Arab EFL learners in constructing conditional sentences. The results showed that learners

³ Al-Saidat, L. (2021). An analysis of errors in conditional sentence constructions.

struggled with both the form and meaning of conditional sentences, with the most common errors being related to word order and verb tense.

Second, the study's main emphasis was on identifying the aptitude of students and determining the prevalent category of conditional sentences that they had grasped, with the purpose of understanding their weaknesses and the level of difficulty they encountered.⁴ The research revealed that the primary category of conditional sentence proficiency among eleventh-grade students at State Islamic Senior High School 2 Pekanbaru was "type I," which accounted for an average score of 0.88 or 38%.

Third, study that investigated The Students' Ability In Using Conditional Sentences At Grade XI Students, SMA Negeri 4 Padangsidimpuan based on these studies.⁵ After doing this research based on the test, it was found that many students have low, enough, high, and very high ability. The mean score of Students Ability in Using Conditional Sentences at Grade XI Students SMA Negeri 4 Padangsidimpuan was 60.34. It could be described as having enough ability.

⁴ Azzali, S. (2019). Students' ability in using conditional sentences at State Islamic Senior High School 2 Pekanbaru.

⁵Nasution, E. (2017). The students' ability in using conditional sentences at grade XI students, SMA Negeri 4 Padangsidimpuan.

Fourth, Based on the given analysis of Arab students' usage of conditional sentences in English, it was found that the concepts of type three conditionals and modality posed the greatest difficulties for students to understand and use correctly.⁶ It seems that no prior research has been conducted to specifically examine students' proficiency in constructing conditional sentences (types I, II, and III) and the significant correction that they face when constructing conditional sentences as a sign that the most difficult part in constructing conditional sentences, as well as the reasons for the students' difficulties in constructing conditional sentences.

As a result, a study named "An Analysis of Students' Ability In Constructing Conditional Sentences" was required.

Not only that, In this study, the research is distinct from the previous studies as it provides new and more specific insights into students' ability to construct conditional sentences in a particular context. While the previous studies focused on identifying the types of errors or dominant types of conditional sentences mastered by students, this study delves deeper into the factors that contribute to students' mistakes and provides specific examples of issues related to conditional sentence formulas, main clauses, if clauses, verb tenses, modal verbs, and word order.

⁶Al Rdaat, S. H. (2017). Analysis of Arab students' usage of conditional sentences in English.

Moreover, the inclusion of interviews with students provides a more comprehensive understanding of their experiences and challenges faced while constructing conditional sentences. Therefore, this study can be considered more comprehensive and valuable in contributing to the literature on students' ability to construct conditional sentences.

H. Organization of Writing

There were five chapters in the systematic review of this study. Numerous subchapters made up each chapter, with the following details:

In chapter one, it is consist of background of the problem about the reason to choose the title of the research. Identification of the problems;. Limitation of the problems, this research focused about students'ability in constructing conditional sentences. Formulation of the problem are how is the students' ability in constructing conditional sentences and what the most difficult part that student faced when construc the sentence. The aims of the research is made to clarify the purpose of the research.

The study's significance is to provide information to teachers about their students' ability to construct conditional sentences as a measure of teaching progress and when another researcher encounters a comparable issue throughout their research, as a reference or for comparison. Definition of operational variables are ability in using

conditional sentences. Then the last outline of the thesis is the content of the thesis generally.

In chapter two consist of the theoretical description. It is consist of constructing conditional sentences in language proficiency and written expression, conditional sentences, and the function of three types of conditional sentences. Review related finding are Enni Nasution's thesis, Sadam Haza' Al Rdaat's journal, and Syafrizal Azzali's thesis.

In chapter three, consist of research methodology. It tells about place and time of research, kinds of the research that used by researcher and research methodology. Type of research is qualitative content analysis research, data, data source, instruments, techinque of data collection, and techinque of data analysis.

In chapter four, data description is presented. It consists of the data description, the result of using conditional sentences, discussion, the threat of the research.

In chapter five, this chapter presents the conclusions drawn from the study, encompassing the results of assessing students' ability in constructing conditional sentences, their categorized proficiency levels, the difficulties encountered during the test, and suggestions for improvement.