CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Language acquisition is largely the same for everyone; both language and language learning share common traits. The number of languages in the globe is enormous. Of them, one of the most frequently used languages in the world is English. According to Crystal, of course English is a global language, as the people would say. It is commonly heard on television, spoken by politicians hailing from various corners of the globe. During travels, one encounters English signage and advertisements consistently. Entering hotels or restaurants in foreign cities, one can expect comprehension of English, along with the presence of an English menu.[1] The universality of English as a global communication language has accentuated the importance of language proficiency, particularly in the context of speaking skills.

Speaking is a fundamental aspect of language acquisition, playing a pivotal role in effective communication. However, it is important to acknowledge that speaking is often regarded as a

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[1] David Crystal, *English as a Global Language,* 2nd Edition, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 2.

challenging skill to master. The dynamic nature of spoken communication, the requirement for real-time processing of language, and the need for fluency pose unique difficulties for learners. According to Martin and Brenny, teaching students that do not speak English is challenging because of the language barrier, but it is by no means impossible.[2]

Grammar, as a cornerstone of language structure, is intricately connected to speaking proficiency. A solid grasp of grammatical rules provides the foundation for constructing coherent and meaningful spoken expressions. Since grammar is very important to be mastered by students, teachers have to know and upgrade their background knowledge of students. According to Ur, grammar does not only affect how units of language are combined in order to 'look right'; it also affects their meaning.[3] Because grammar permeates all language skills, including speaking, reading, writing, and listening, it plays a significant role in English. This is because grammar is a language structure that directs students to understand about language, it teaches students how to build language skills.

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[2] Candace Martin and Kathleen Brenny, *1000 Best New Teacher Survival Secrets,* (Illionis: Sourcebooks Inc., 2005), 164.

[3] Penny Ur, *A Course in Language Teaching; Practice and Theory,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 76.

As the explanation above, language proficiency is a multifaceted skill encompassing various components, among which grammar mastery and speaking ability play pivotal roles. The acquisition of grammatical knowledge forms the foundation for effective communication, particularly in a language as globally significant as English. In the context of SMKN 1 Kota Serang as the site for this study, the intersection between students' grammar mastery and their speaking English skill becomes a pertinent subject of investigation.

SMKN 1 Kota Serang has been chosen as the research setting due to the outstanding achievements of its students in both academic and non-academic pursuits. Based on the interview with the English teacher, these students have demonstrated remarkable success in various competitions, including those related to entrepreneurship, sports, and language proficiency. The choice of SMKN 1 Kota Serang as the research site is deliberate, aiming to explore the relationship between grammar mastery and speaking skills in a setting where students have excelled not only academically but also in diverse extracurricular activities.

Within the dynamic learning environment of SMKN 1 Kota Serang, a distinctive scenario emerges where students exhibit a diverse range of language proficiency. It has been observed in preliminary research that certain students, despite facing challenges in mastering grammar intricacies, demonstrate commendable proficiency in spoken English. Conversely, there are instances where students exhibit strong speaking skills while grappling with grammatical nuances.

This phenomenon at SMKN 1 Kota Serang raises intriguing questions about the interplay between grammar mastery and speaking English skill among the student population. The coexistence of students with varying strengths and weaknesses in these language components prompts an exploration into the factors influencing this duality. The presence of students who excel in spoken English despite potential grammatical shortcomings suggests the existence of alternative pathways to language proficiency. Understanding the mechanisms that enable students to compensate for grammatical deficiencies through enhanced speaking abilities becomes pivotal in reshaping language teaching methodologies.

Conversely, the cohort of students with robust grammar mastery but limited speaking proficiency underscores the complexity of language acquisition. It prompts an examination of potential barriers or gaps in the current pedagogical approaches that may hinder the seamless transition from grammatical knowledge to practical language application.

This research thus seeks to unravel the underlying dynamics of these contrasting scenarios within the students' grammar mastery and their speaking English skill of SMKN 1 Kota Serang. By investigating the correlation between grammar mastery and speaking English skill, the study aims to shed light on the intricate relationship between these two facets of language proficiency. The findings are expected to empower teachers with the knowledge to develop targeted interventions, accommodating the diverse needs of students and fostering a holistic approach to English language education.

B. Identification of Problem

Based on the background above the writer identified the problem as follows:

1. The students have less motivation to improve speaking ability.

2. The students mostly learn grammar at their school.

3. There are students who face challenges in mastering grammar intricacies, demonstrate commendable proficiency in spoken English.

4. There are instances where students exhibit strong speaking skills while grappling with grammar mastery.

C. Research Question

Based on the background above the research question as follow:

1. How the students' grammar mastery and speaking English skill at SMKN 1 Serang City?

2. How the correlation between students' grammar mastery and their speaking English skill at SMKN 1 Serang City?

D. Objective of The Study

Based on the research question above, the objective of study can be concluded as follows:

1. To explain the grammar mastery and speaking English skill of students' SMKN 1 Serang City

2. To elaborate correlation between students' grammar mastery and their speaking English skill at SMKN 1 Serang City.

E. Significant of the Study

Based on the writer's perspective from the mini research that the writer has conducted, the writer believes that of the four components of learning a foreign language (English), developing speaking skills is the most challenging for language learners to master. This, coupled with the instability of the focus of language learning in our country towards language foreigners, gives the writer hope that the writer can make a small scientific contribution to the discussion. One can list the advantages of this study:

1. Obviously, the writer himself will gain from this research because he will Grasp a process and gain experience by working in the field first hand.

2. This research will be helpful for instructors, who will learn from it that our country's current foreign language education system places too much emphasis on Grammar alone and that teachers don`t do enough to help students improve their speaking abilities in foreign language.

3. This study will be helpful to readers, particulary those who are studying a foreign Language, and it will also strive to make readers aware that there needs to be a balance between speaking proficiency and grammar mastery.

F. Limitation of the study

The purpose of learning English certainly the school and the teachers hope students who learn English have to control four aspect of learning English it is reading, listening, writing and speaking. And in this case, the writer focused on the correlation between students' grammar mastery and speaking English skill at the SMKN1 *Kota Serang* at eleventh grade. During 2023/2024 of academic year and to avoid misunderstanding about this research, the writer limits on the correlation between students' grammar mastery and speaking English ability.

G. Previous Study

The writer also has a number of earlier investigations in this study that are used as references for the writer as he completes this research.

The first previous study is conducted by Putri and Refnaldi. The research is entitled "The Correlation between Students' Vocabulary Mastery and Speaking Ability at Grade 8 of Junior High School". *Journal of English Language Teaching,* Vol. 9, No. 2, 2020.[4]

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[4] Aulia Putri & Refnaldi, "The Correlation between Students' Vocabulary Mastery and Speaking Ability at Grade 8 of Junior High School", *Journal of English Language Teaching,* Vol. 9, No. 2, (2020), 44.

This study aimed to unravel the interplay between students' mastery of vocabulary and their proficiency in speaking within the eighth-grade context of SMP Negeri 26 Padang. Employing a quantitative research approach with a correlational design, the research sampled 30 students from the eighth grade using a clustering sampling technique. The research tools comprised a vocabulary test featuring 50 multiple-choice questions and a speaking test involving role-playing scenarios. The obtained data, constituting the interpretation of students' performance in both vocabulary and speaking tests, revealed a moderately satisfactory level, substantiated by mean scores of 65 for vocabulary mastery and 68 for speaking ability. Furthermore, an identified robust correlation underscored the significant connection between students' vocabulary mastery and their speaking proficiency which is shown by the $r_{value} = 0,703$.

Based on Putri and Refnaldi research there is a very significant difference on the independent which is vocabulary mastery. Meanwhile the writer's independent variable focuses on grammar mastery. In addition, the subjects of the writer's research are senior high school students. In the term of calculation, they do not investigate how many percentages the independent contribution by calculating the determination of coefficient.

The second previous study is conducted by Betoni and Ulfaika. The research is entitled "The Correlation between Students' Grammatical Mastery and Students' Writing Achievement at XI Grade Students of SMAN 1 Tarakan Academic Year 2019/2020". *Borneo Journal of English Language Education,* Vol. 1, No. 2, 2020.[5]

The primary aim of this study was to uncover the relational dynamics between students' proficiency in grammar and their accomplishments in writing at the eleventh-grade level in SMAN 1 Tarakan. Employing a correlational research methodology, a specific class among the eleven eleventh-grade classes was purposively sampled for data collection, involving Grammar and Writing Tests. Utilizing the Pearson Product Moment for data analysis within a quantitative approach and correlation design, the findings disclosed a discernible connection between students' grasp of grammar intricacies and their proficiency in writing. The result showed that between students' grammatical mastery and students' writing achievement obtained a significance value of ≤ 0.05 with a significant value of

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[5] Theodorus Betoni & Romlah Ulfaika, "The Correlation Between Students' Grammatical Mastery and Students' Writing Achievement at XI Grade Students of SMAN 1 Tarakan Academic Year 2019/2020", *Borneo Journal of English Language Education,* Vol. 1, No. 2, (2020), 42.

0.002 ≤ 0.05 which means that there was a significant correlation between grammatical mastery and writing achievement, The outcomes of this research and ensuing discussions distinctly affirm a noteworthy correlation between students' grammatical mastery and their prowess in writing among the eleventh-grade students at SMAN 1 Tarakan with the $r_{value} = 0{,}510$.

Based on Betoni and Ulfaika's research, a very significant difference is that the dependent variable of their research is writing skill which is different than the writer's dependent variable focusing on speaking skill. In addition, they do not investigate how many percentages the independent contribution by calculating the determination of coefficient.

The third previous study is conducted by Albadri and Halimah. The research is entitled "The Correlation between Reading and Speaking Skills on Students` English Learning as a Foreign Language". *JOEY: Journal of English Ibrahimy*, Vol. 1 No. 2, 2022.[6]

The primary objective of this study is to explore the connection between students' reading and speaking skills in the context of learning English as a foreign language. Employing a quantitative

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[6] Albadri & Noer Halimah, "The Correlation between Reading and Speaking Skills on Students` English Learning as a Foreign Language", *JOEY: Journal of English Ibrahimy*, Vol. 1 No. 2, (2022), 27.

correlation design, the research was conducted among the first-grade students at SMA Ibrahimy Sukorejo, totaling 642 individuals within the population. A targeted sample of 62 students was selected through a purposive technique, and data collection involved tests and observations. The intricate relationship between reading and speaking skills and the process of learning English in Class 1 at SMA Ibrahimy Sukorejo, Situbondo, was then scrutinized using the Pearson product-moment correlation analysis. The outcomes of the research provide compelling evidence suggesting a positive and statistically significant correlation between the independent variable, namely Reading Skills, and the dependent variable, which pertains to Speaking Skills. Based on the score sig $1.000 \leq 0.05$. The Alternative Hypothesis (Ha) is accepted based on the results of the hypothesis testing, and based on the output of the analysis of the Pearson formula in SPSS, it has a significant score (Sig) of 0.24 and 1.000. Score Sig 0.05 indicates that the independent variable has an impact on the dependent variable. This implies that as students demonstrate a higher proficiency in reading, there is a corresponding positive impact on their ability to speak in English. The identified correlation underscores the interconnected nature of these language skills, emphasizing that an enhancement in one domain is associated with improvements in the

other. This finding not only contributes to our understanding of the dynamics between reading and speaking skills but also implies that interventions or educational strategies aimed at bolstering reading proficiency may concurrently yield positive outcomes in students' speaking English ability.

The difference study by Albadri and Halimah with the writer is that their independent variable is reading while the writer focuses on grammar mastery. In the term of calculation, they do not investigate how many percentages the independent contribution by calculating the determination of coefficient. In addition, the research subjects are tenth-grade students, while writer examined the subjects of eleventh-grade senior high school students.

H. Organization of Writing

This paper is arranged into five chapters, every chapter has some points to explain the chapter.

a. Chapter I – Introduction

This chapter covers the background of the study, problem definition, significance of the study, object of the problem, research question, research objective, organization of the paper and previous research.

b. Chapter II – Theoretical Framework

This chapter includes the theories of some of the experts who have done research related to this research.

c. Chapter III – Methodology

This chapter covers place and time studies, populations and samples, aid search, data collection techniques, and data analysis techniques.

d. Chapter IV – Result and Discussion

This chapter includes the result of the research and the discussion based on what the writer found during the research.

e. Chapter V – Conclusion and Suggestion

To end this paper, the writer answers the research question in conclusion part. In addition, the writer also suggests for the teachers, students, and further researchers.