

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In trying to succeed in the complex task of learning English, there are a lot of factors that may influence the learners. Some of the factors are behaviour, learning style, motivation, and belief (Ellis, 1994, p. 471). Those factors, especially belief, will be different for different learners. According to Ellis, learners' beliefs is an important individual difference in second language learning (1994, p. 473). As people shall see, beliefs will influence learners' actions that they undertake in the classroom. Learners with high beliefs may well perform better on achievement tasks of learning second language than the others (Williams & Burden, 1997, p. 129).

In addition to beliefs, the grammar instruction is also important when learning English. Grammar is important in learning English because studying grammar will help the learners fluent in English. According to Ellis (1994, p. 478), the best way to learn English is to spend most of the learners' time to memorize vocabulary and grammar rules. Moreover, the importance of grammar instruction in learning English can be imagined as men who need skeleton to protect their soft tissues and main vital internal organs from being damaged. It means that grammar plays a vital role in learning English. Proper grammar is also essential for communication. In real life, moreover, people cannot communicate well to each other without

knowing the knowledge of grammar whereas everything is impossible to be done without communication. In other words, proper grammar lays the groundwork for effective communication (Johnson, 2014). Besides that, grammar instruction is also important in reading second language book. They cannot understand everything that is written in English if they do not know the rules of the grammar. Thus, if the students have less knowledge about grammar, it may influence reading, writing, speaking skills.

Faculty of Language and Arts in Soegijapranata Catholic University Semarang has indicated the importance of grammar instruction in learning English. Grammar instruction is necessary and it is offered as a part of required courses. In the Faculty of Language and Arts, there are 16 credits that students must learn about grammar. For example, the Faculty of Language and Arts' students should take Structure 1-3 classes in the first until third semester, then they take TOEFL 1 class in the fourth semester. The previous study by Loewen, et al. found that effective grammar instructions will help students use their knowledge as they write, speak, and read.

The previous study that was conducted by Loewen, et al. (2009, p. 102) used a questionnaire that was adapted from BALLI (Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory) to elicit the beliefs of 754 students studying English as second language and those studying a foreign language, at Michigan State University. They showed that learners did not necessarily feel that grammar was useful for just one skill. The results indicated that

studying grammar benefited them in learning a language and grammar was central to the language learning endeavor.

Not only focusing in grammar instruction, but also developing a range of strategies is important. One of those strategies the writer wants to focus on is error correction. Learning English as a second language is not easy because usually learners make an error. Williams & Burden said error correction, moreover, is like a miracle for those “who feel a sense of learned helplessness see their failures as due to lack of ability and give up altogether.” (1997, p. 137). It means without error correction, it is difficult for students to discover that a learning task has been completely correct.

Based on those phenomena, therefore, the writer has an interest in the factors that may influence learners in learning English, especially beliefs in grammar instruction and error correction. Moreover, in the study, the writer did a replica study by adapting the close-ended questionnaire that was used by Loewen, et al. study in 2009 and choosing 2013 and 2014 Faculty of Language and Arts Soegijapranata Catholic University students, who were studying English as a second language, as the participants.

1.2 FIELD OF THE STUDY

This study is within the domain of second language acquisition because it focuses on second language learners' beliefs.

1.3 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study focuses on students' beliefs in grammar instruction and error correction. The writer conducted this study in Faculty of Language and Arts Soegijapranata Catholic University students who had already taken Structure 1-3 and TOEFL 1 classes.

1.4 PROBLEM FORMULATION

Two main research questions are raised as the framework of the collection and analysis of the data in the present study, as follows.

1. What are 2013 and 2014 Faculty of Language and Arts Soegijapranata Catholic University students' beliefs in grammar instruction in learning English?
2. What are 2013 and 2014 Faculty of Language and Arts Soegijapranata Catholic University students' beliefs in error correction in learning English?

1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

According to the problems mentioned above, through this study, the writer can achieve two following objectives:

1. To discover 2013 and 2014 Faculty of Language and Arts Soegijapranata Catholic University students' beliefs in grammar instruction in learning English.

2. To inquire 2013 and 2014 Faculty of Language and Arts Soegijapranata Catholic University students' beliefs in error correction in learning English.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The writer expects that this study can be a useful reference for both students and the lecturers in Faculty of Language and Arts, especially in grammar instruction as the basic skill of learning English and error correction as the one of motivating influence to improve students' performances so that much communication in a targeted language is develop in class or real life. By realizing their improvements and achievements, the writer wants students to have a huge of felling success. The writer also trusts this study gives a contributibution to the study of linguistics, mainly in second language acquisition. This study is also supposed to be an inspiration for the next study of second language learner's beliefs.

1.7 DEFINITION OF TERMS

There are several terms that are frequently used in the pesent study:

a. Belief

According to William & Burden (1997, p. 128), belief is an important determinant in motivating people to behave in certain ways.

b. Grammar

According to Frodesen (2001, p. 234), grammar is an integral part of language use; it is a resource to be accessed for effective communication, not just an isolated body of knowledge.

c. Error correction

According to Dulay, Burt, & Krashen (1982, p. 138), error correction is listener's or reader's response given to the flawed side of learner's speech or writing.

