CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Fisher (1977) as quoted by Merika (2007) states that grammar is a set of rules which tells how language should be used. Language does not exist without Grammar. Grammar is one of the language components that plays a very important role in learning a language. It is used in all language skills: Listening, Writing, Reading and Speaking. As such, Grammar also plays a very important role in the English Language Teaching and Learning.

English teachers are the role models for their students. In the English classes at school, students will learn English through teacher's explanations, through the exercises given, through the inputs that the teachers give to their work, and also through other teacher-student activities. One of the requirements of being role models and professional English teachers is by mastering the English grammar. It is important since the teachers have to explain about English in the classroom and the use of their English in any act also will become the example of the English use for students. By mastering grammar they will be able to deliver English lessons well and they can become the good example in the use of English. Therefore, the students of the English Department who are trained to be high school teachers must master grammar really well so that they can give good examples of English to the students and deliver English lessons well.

Due to the important role of grammar in English Language Teaching, the English Department obliges the students to take all of the four series of Structure classes during their study in this Department. The four

series (Structure I, Structure II, Structure III, and Structure IV) are arranged in such away that the difficulty level of the materials increases gradually from one semester to the other semester.

Since the first year of their study in this Department, the students have been introduced to grammar through the Intensive Course (IC) class. Besides presenting the skills of English (speaking, listening, reading and writing), the IC class also covers the basic grammar of English. Based on *Buku Pedoman Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan 2006/2007,* the IC class aims at leveling off the students of the first semester so that they have sufficient competence and strong foundation to study further. The English Department of Widya Mandala uses *Interchange Third Edition* by Jack C. Richard for the materials for the IC class. This book uses high-interest themes to integrate speaking, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, listening reading, and writing (Jack C. Richard: 2005). There is strong focus in both accuracy and fluency. Learning IC gives broader chance for the students to learn grammar and its function in the real conversation.

As for the IC and the other classes, the English Department applies the credit-system for the teaching-learning program. It is in line with the decisions of Mendikbud RI No. 0211/V/1982 and No. 212/V/198, and also Surat Keputusan Direktur Jendral Pendidikan Tinggi No. 048/DJ/Kep/1982. One credit means 170 minutes which consist of:

50 minutes   : classroom activity

60 minutes   : assignment

60 minutes   : independent study

At the English Department, each Structure I and II is valued with 4 credit hours and Structure III and IV with 2 credit hours.

The independent study and assignment are given larger portion in the credits to ensure students' success in taking the classes. By giving the larger portion for the students to learn outside the classroom, hopefully the students will have a larger portion to relearn beyond the classroom what they have got in the classroom independently and will not depend on only the 50 minutes of the lectures in the classroom. However most of the students are reluctant to study for 120 minutes more beyond the classroom hours.

Evidence shows that even some students of the English Department have to retake the Structure classes for more than twice. This is shown by the following table below.

Table 1.1

The scores and percentage of the English Department students

in Structure I, II and III class in 2008

Structure 1

Score	Percentage
A	10
B+	10
B	18.66
C+	7
C	13.66
D	11,66
E	29.66
41.32% students have to retake Structure class again	

Structure 2

Score	Percentage
A	18
B+	6.33
B	22.66
C+	12.33
C	16.33
D	12
E	12.33
24.33% students have to retake Structure class again	

Structure 3

Score	Percentage
A	30
B+	5
B	17.66
C+	7
C	9.6
D	10
E	21
31% students have to retake Structure class again	

It can be seen from the table above that 41. 32% or almost a half of the students in Structure 1 class had to retake Structure class again. This shows that the result of Structure classes at the English Department of Widya Mandala University is not really satisfactory.

To provide resources for the students to do the assignments and independent study, English Department has established the Self Access Center (shortened as SAC) since 1998. In line with this purpose, the SAC provides various kinds of audio visual materials, an audio visual room, a movie room, hundred of exercises, books and lots of other materials to provide students with a rich language learning environment offering a variety of carefully chosen, well-presented and easily accessible resources which will allow learners to work according to their individual interests, needs and learning styles. Tutorial hours with the SAC counselors are also provided to discuss English materials with the students.

Gill Sturtridge (1992) stated as quoted by Widiati (1996) that a Self-Access Center is any system which makes materials available to language learners so that they can choose to work as they wish, usually without a teacher or with very limited teacher support. Based on the concept of the SAC which is based on the autonomous (independent) learners' need, the SAC users will get the benefits of the resources if they know how to learn at this center. Students must know what to learn and where and how to find the material and other resources at the SAC. However, the students may also get lost in the jungle of materials and facilities. Pathways in this case can help to guide and direct the students to learn autonomously at the SAC so they can make the best use of the resources at the SAC. Simply said, pathway is a map which is made by the students by listing the core materials, supplement materials and, or activities that they want and can do in the SAC to achieve a specific ability or goal through studying at the SAC. As what Miller and Rogerson-Revell said, as quoted by Kell and Clive Newton (1997), the organization of pathways could be described as a

simplified 'control-access center', where 'learners are directed to a specific set of materials'. By using pathways the students will be given freedom to choose part of the materials that they want to learn and to choose the facilities at the SAC to help them develop their English. At the same time, by using pathways the students' learning process at the SAC will be more efficient, well-ordered and structured. It incorporates a realistic learning program to decide what learning materials to use, determines what periods, and with what intensity, and a clear idea of how learning is to be accessed (Widiati: 2009).

So far, there are no studies about the use of pathways and students' perceptions toward the use of pathways done at the English Department of Widya Mandala Catholic University, and the students' perceptions toward the use of pathways. Related to this fact and the fact of the unsatisfactory result of the structure classes, the writer purposes the use of pathways for the students to help them do their assignment and independent study. For this reason, the writer conducts a study entitled "The Use of Pathways at Self-Access Center to Improve Student's Achievement in Grammar".

1.2 Statements of The Problems

This study is conducted to answer the following problems:

1. Is there any significant difference in the grammar achievement of the students who study at the SAC using pathways from those who do not?

2. What are the students' perceptions of learning grammar at the SAC using pathways?

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

Derived from the above problem statements, this study aims at:

1. To find out whether there is a significant difference in the grammar achievement of the students who study at the SAC using pathways from those who do not

2. To find out the students' perceptions of learning grammar at the SAC using pathways

1.4 Theoretical Framework

This study is based on the James Kell and Clive Newton's theory (1997) about the role of pathways at Self-Access Center and supported by the theory about autonomous learning. According to the theory, the function of pathways is to direct the students not just through one textbook or worksheet, but through hundreds, or even thousand of them. Pathways will help the students who are learning to be more autonomous. This method is hoped to help them in getting a better achievement in grammar. The creations of entire webs of such pathways help students in their varying needs. These pathways would help students to cover a significant pathways amount of the materials in the self-access center. To strengthen her study the writer also write this study based on the theory of constructivism, which believes that learners generate knowledge and meaning from their experiences. The writer uses the theories especially those dealing with pathways, self-access center, autonomy, constructivism and grammar. These theories are important for analyzing the data collected.

1.5 Hypothesis

In view of the fact that this study intends to investigate the significant difference in the grammar achievement between the ones using pathways at the SAC and those who don't in English Department of Teacher Training and Education Widya Mandala Surabaya Catholic University, the temporary answers to problem statements are formulated as follows,

Ha: There is a significant difference in the grammar achievement of the   students who study at the SAC using pathways from those who do not.

To test the alternative hypothesis, the null hypotheses are formulated as follow,

Ho: There is no significant difference in the grammar achievement of the students who study at the SAC using pathways from those who do not.

1.6   The Significance of The Study

1.   The writer hopes that the information in this study will contribute and help the SAC's staff, students and teachers in maximizing the function of the Self-Access Center as a rich language learning environment for the students to learn English.

2.   The results of this study are also expected can decrease students' dependence to the grammar teachers' lecturing in the classroom and increase the awareness to

learn grammar autonomously, effectively and efficiently through Pathways using the resources which have been provided by the Self-Access Center.

3. Finally, the writer hopes that the students can use Pathways independently as a tool to improve their achievement and ability in grammar, so that they can become more proficient in using English as a second language.

1.7 Scope and Limitation

The subject of the study is limited to the English Department students of Widya Mandala. The taken samples are two Intensive Course classes of the English Department in the academic year 2009/2010. The samples are expected to be able to represent the college students who have the Self-Access Center at their campus.

The main purpose of this study is to see significant difference in the grammar achievement of the students who study at the SAC using pathways from those who do not. Grammar that the writer means here is the grammatical structure which the meaning, according to Francis (1958), is the organizing of morphemes and words into larger meaningful utterances. However due to the limited time, the grammar parts that will be studied and tested to the students are limited into the part of speech which only cover two parts: Tenses (Past Simple and Present Perfect Tense) and Passive Voice. These grammar parts are expected to be able to represent the grammar lesson that the students achieved in their college.

1.8 Assumption

1. Since the students may have different needs and weaknesses in grammar, the composition of students' Pathways may differ from one to another,

2. The students will use the two hundred minutes outside the classroom through Pathways at the Self-Access Center.

3. The teachers who taught Intensive Course in class B and the one who taught in class D were assumed to have equal qualification and teaching experience and also deliver the same portions of learning materials to both groups.

4. Admission of applicants to English Department of Widya Mandala Catholic University as entering freshmen is based on some requirements including the academic performance in high school and the results on entrance exam from the Widya Mandala University. Thus, it can be said that they have more or less the same level of language proficiency. As a result the two groups used in the study can be considered to have the same level of grammar proficiency.

1.9 Definition of Key Terms

1. Grammar is a set of rules which tells how language should be used. (Fisher, 1977)

2. Autonomy learning refers to aptitude of study to manage one's own affairs. (Holec, 1979).

3. Constructivism refers to a theory about learning which emphasizes the importance of the knowledge, beliefs, and skills an individual brings to the experience of learning (Brooks & Brooks, 1995)

4. Pathways refers to a mind map which can guide the students to learn in the Self-Access Center and use the facilities there to learn. (James Kell and Clive Newton, 1997)

5. Self-Access Center refers to a place which provides the student a rich language learning environment offering a variety of carefully chosen, well-presented and easily accessible resources will allow learners to work according to their individual interests, needs and learning styles. (Ciel Language Support Network, accessed April 17th, 2009)

6. The grammar achievement of the students refers to the improvement of the student's grade during their pretest and posttest of grammar

1.10 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis will be divided into five chapters. The first chapter is the introduction that includes the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the objective of the study, the significance of the study, the definition of key terms, the scope and limitation, and the organization of the study. The second chapter will consist of the review of related literature. Research method will be presented in chapter three. While chapter four will deal with the data collection and findings. In the last chapter, the writer will draw conclusions and give some suggestions that may be worthy for the readers especially teachers and for the following related study.