

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the introduction of the study which is divided into five parts and is organized in the order as follows background of the study, research problem, theoretical framework, significance of the study, scope of the study, and definition of the key terms.

A. Background of the Study

To avoid misunderstanding while communicating, people should comprehend pragmatic competence well. The pragmatic aspect in communication should not be underestimate. Lack of ability to employ the pragmatic aspects or inability to speak English appropriately according to whom, how, when, and what they speak to leads to misunderstanding and miscommunication (Hymes, 1974 and Amaya, 2008). If we do not pay attention to them, there might be a communication problem appeared or in the other word, miscommunication. To make the process of exchanging information runs smoothly, both the speaker and the receiver should master the language especially its pragmatic aspect.

.During the past 15 years, researchers have studied the question tag construction. It can be concluded that there is a formula in conducting a question tag. Question tags are short phrases added to the end of sentences by speakers to get confirmation that their audience is following or agreeing with what the speakers saying (Azar, 1989; Lester, 2009; Roostini, 2011). In addition, Kimps

(2018) claimed that the tag in question tag is a phrase like “isn’t it?” added at the end of a statement to make sure its fact underlying the statement, for instance in “It’s very particular writing, isn’t it?”

The type of English question tag stated by Kimps above is called a grammatically dependent question tag in which its anchor and its tag have the opposite polarity. Then, Kimps added that there is another type called a grammatically independent question tag in which the words such as ", eh?", and ", right?" act as the tag. The grammatically independent question tag can be generalized as “, innit?” as it is more commonly used in environments than the grammatically dependent question tag (Downing & Locke, 2006; Tottie & Hoffmann, 2006).

The use of question tag among native speakers like British, American, and Australian is considered common. They usually apply it in their daily conversations. Question tag as one specific subset of discourse markers is an integral part of everyday conversations in different Englishes worldwide (Wilson, et. al. 2017). The comparative studies have been conducted previously. By those researches, it can be wrapped up that question tag are particularly frequent in British English (Tottie & Hoffmann, 2006; Hoffman, et. al., 2014; and Barron, et. al., 2015).

The question tag is one of the materials being taught for the eighth-grader of Junior High School in Indonesia (Harahap, 2019). Several studies have been conducted to know the difficulties that Junior High School students had to face in

constructing a question tag. The results show that the eighth graders made mistakes in creating a question tag (Sunarti, 2011; Syamsiah, 2011; Hendriyono, 2018). Besides, the material is limited to the construction of the grammatically dependent question tag. Based on the preliminary study, the students did not know another type of question tag. They did not know that the grammatically independent question tag exists.

Moreover, they did not have any idea on how to answer the question tag properly. They tended to give a short answer and were confused when they were asked the question tag containing negative statement. They were likely to answer both the question tags that include positive and negative anchors with the word "Yes". The word "Yes" implies that the speaker is agreeing with the statement. However, when they were asked further about the information, they did not agree with the statement in the anchor. Here, the confusion in answering the question tag appeared. It might lead to miscommunication.

Furthermore, the English department students who enroll in English Language Teaching faculty may become teachers for the future. They contribute to the students' skill especially English. Moreover, they give their knowledge to their students in constructing and answering the question tag. The English department students must know the function of English question tag and how to conduct and respond English question tags properly.

Besides, English department students have a possibility in communicating with natives of English in some ways. Their future jobs such as a translator or a

spokesperson may force them to have a conversation with natives of English. It cannot be refuted if one day the natives of English conduct a question tag to ask and get information from the English department students. The misunderstanding might happen when the English department students could not conduct and respond to the question tag properly.

In this research, the answers to how non-native speakers of English produce and respond to English question tag were sought. The information of how English department students create and respond to English question tag properly and appropriately were looked for.

B. Research Problem

Based on the background of the study, the research problems were elaborated as follows:

1. What are types of English question tag produced by English department students?
2. How do English department students respond English question tag?
3. What are the functions of English question tag produced by English department students according to the given contexts based on native speakers?
4. How is the appropriateness of the responses of English question tag made by English department students in given contexts based on native speakers?

C. Significance of the Study

This study was expected to be advantageous for several groups of people like English department students and future researchers. First, the researcher hoped that the outcome of this study can become beneficial information for the English department students especially Indonesian for the reason that it provided the condition of how the English department students produce and answer the English question tag. If the answer was much way different from how natives English do, the English department students might improve their skill.

Second, the results of the study were able to give contributions to future researchers. This study was demanded to be significant as a reference for those who are willing to conduct the study in the same field. The future researchers who want to evaluate grammatical production of sentences may consider the criteria used in this study or develop other criteria from another expert. Moreover, future researchers may evaluate other types of question using a different method of research.

D. Scope and Limitation of the Study

The study analyzes only one type of interrogative sentence which was question tag. Here, the researcher only sought information about the production of the English question tag and its response. The other interrogative sentence types like yes or no question, alternative question, and WH-question were not being discussed here. Moreover, this current research focused on investigating the question tag using the Discourse Completion Task (DCT). The DCT was done in

the written form. It could not be expected to study the intonation while creating and answering question tag.

E. Definition of the Key Terms

This part presents some definitions of key terms such as Grammar, and Question Tag.

1. Question Tag

Question tag is a question added at the end of a sentence and is used to make sure that their information is correct or to seek agreement.

2. Types of English Question Tag

Question tag is divided into two types such as grammatically dependent question tag and grammatically independent question tag.

3. Respond to English Question Tag

To answer the English question tag, the respondents should consider the sentence or the anchor.

4. English Department Students

The English Department students in this research is specifically Indonesians who are learning formally in English Department.