

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of the Problem

Fromkin (1999:346) states that, language is unique in that no other complex system of knowledge is more easily acquired at a younger age than at an older one

Gleason (1961:56) describes that, language is one of the most important and characteristic forms of human behavior. It has, accordingly always had a place in the academic world..

In recent years, however, its position has changed greatly: at one time the study of language was almost entirely restricted to specific languages, primarily those of Western Europe and Classical antiquity; over the last of few generations, a much broader consideration of language has taken a place at the side of the study of individual language.

Gleason (1961:7) states that, in learning a second language, someone will find that vocabulary is comparatively easy, in spite of the fact is vocabulary the student fear most. The harder part is mastering new structures in both content and expression. Someone may have to free himself from the bondage of thinking of everything as either singular or plural. Perhaps the new language will organize content into singular, dual or plural (here meaning "three or more"). or perhaps the new language will not give routine consideration the matter.

English speakers can never make a statement without saying something about the number of every object mentioned. Sidney Greenbaum and Randolph Quirk, in

their book "A University Grammar of English"(1991: 80), explained that the English number system comprises singular, which denotes 'one', and plural which denotes 'more than one'. The singular category includes common non-count nouns and proper nouns. Count nouns are variable, occurring with either singular or plural number (*boy-boys*), or have invariable plural (*cattle*), an English noun is either singular or plural, and the plural is usually formed by addition of an "s" as a suffix. Neither the gender nor the case of the noun interferes with the inflection of the number. The ending of a word is the same in all cases, normally an unvoiced consonant. Rauf (1977:5) declared that, in Arabic the problem is more complete on account of the following reasons:

- a. Arabic nouns fall into three categories namely, Singular which denotes one, Dual which indicates two and plural which indicates more than two.
- b. The grammar to be added to be singular to form the Dual depends on the case; and the suffix added to form the plural depends on gender and also on the case of the nouns. In one category of the plural, its formation is by transformation the singular.

The regular rule that forms plural from singular nouns does not apply to words such as *child-children, man-men, sheep-sheep, criterion-criteria*. These words are exception to the English Inflectional rule of plural formations.

When the people as children, they are learning the language, that is acquiring (or constructing) the grammar, they have to learn specially grammar that studies the plural form, for example the plural form of *man* is *men*. For this reason, frequently, it is found the children say *mans, persons, deers, etc*. They first learn the regular rules, and

until they learn the exceptions to these rules, they apply them generally to all the nouns. These children's errors, in fact, support our position that the regular plural exist. Some of the irregular forms must be listed separately in our mental lexicons, as *suppletive forms*.

The explanation will be clear with these examples:

The word "book" is singular to make plural just adding -s as suffix become "books", in other hand, there is a noun "Potato" become "Potatoes", but sometime there is a noun "Child" to become Plural cannot adding -s to be Childs but there is Special Form for it, the plural form of Child is Children, it is mentioned irregular plural. Likewise the other noun plural, there are some words which have Regular Plural and there are some nouns which have Irregular Plural. And the difficulties of how to determine the Irregular and Special Plural is. As Arabic does, there are two kinds of Plural, The Sound Plural جمع السالم and The Broken Plural جمع التكسير, to form

The Sound Plural depends on the gender, there are The Sound Masculine Plural جمع المنكر السالم which forming the plural from singular the word **مسلم** just add **ن + و** become **مسلمون** And The Sound Feminine Plural or جمع المؤنث السالم which forming the plural from singular the word **مسلمة** just add **ت + ا** become **مسلمات**, The Plural form like this in English called Regular Plural Form. The Irregular plural Form in Arabic called جمع التكسير to form Plural the word **كتاب** is not add **ن + و** or **ت + ا** become **كتابتون** or **كتابات** but this word followed measure **فعل** become **كتبت**, in other hand there are also some words which is not follow measure **فعل** but follow measure **مفاعل**, such as the word **مدرسة** become **مدارس**.

The explanation above, shows that the background of the problem in this research is the difficulties of the learners in finding or applying the plural form of English and Arabic, especially in irregular plural forms, and the writer has an initiative to obtain a deep understanding of the element in the grammar of both that applied in the comparative study between English and Arabic with title of thesis The Comparison between English and Arabic Plural Forms.

### **B. Formulation of the Problem**

Extracted from the description in advance, it shows discrimination between English plural form and Arabic's. Although in reality both of them possess the same concept and signification. The main distinction is the quantity of thing which called plural and the categories of Masculine and Feminine in Arabic.

In formulating the problem of this thesis, the writer divides it into three parts namely:

#### 1. The identification of the problem

- The field of research

The research field in this thesis is Grammar

- The approach of research

The research approach in this thesis is using the qualitative research. It means that the writer use Library Research to obtain the baseline data.

- The problem of research

The problem of this research is the differences and the similarities of plural form especially Irregular and Special Plural form whether in English or in Arabic.

## 2. The limitation of the problem

The problem from this title is too large, so its impossible for the writer to discuss all of it. However, the writer would like to limit this problem with:

- a. Knowledge about kinds of plural in English and Arabic.
- b. The similarities and the differences between English and Arabic Plural form.

## 3. The question of research

There are three kinds of questions below:

1. How are the English plural forms?
2. How are the Arabic plural forms?
3. What are the similarities and the differences between English and the Arabic plural forms?

## **C. The Aim of Research**

The research accomplished by the writer is purposed:

- To know the English plural forms.
- To know the Arabic plural forms.
- To know the similarities and the differences between English and Arabic plural forms.

#### **D. The Frame Of Thinking**

Longman (2001:206) mentioned that language is a system of communication by written or spoken word, which is used by the people of a particular country or area. When study human language someone is approaching what some might call the human essence the distinctive qualities of mind that are so far as we know unique to man. When someone knows a language, he can speak and be understood by others who know that language.

To understand the nature of language someone must understand the nature of this internalized, unconscious set of rules, which is part of every grammar of every language. Teaching grammar assume that the student already knows one language and compares the grammars of the target language with the grammar of the native language.

Any person, particularly a student, who wants to possess a good command of any language has to comprehend and master the grammatical rules of the language. Therefore it can be said that the mastery of grammar is not optional but compulsory for whoever wishes to procure a good possession of any language, every language in all over the world have their grammar, in Arabic it called *nahwu* (نحو). Every grammar of language has different rules, but if learned deeply will be found some of the similarities and some of the differences, as Arabic does.

One of the elements of English grammar is Parts of speech, which consists of The Eight parts of speech, and the first is Noun. Noun has singular and plural form, but in this thesis, the writer just discuss about plural form. The plural of most noun is

made by just adding –s to the singular. But Michael Swan (1996:521-523) declared that there are some special cases, there are regular plurals, irregular plurals and special plurals, likewise in Arabic grammar or نحو. There are two kinds of plural, the one which has only a single form is the sound plural. This has two categories, the Sound Masculine Plural and the Sound Feminine Plural. The other which has various forms called Broken Plural. But the important thing from English and Arabic Plural form is the number or quantity of the thing. The English plural counted from two. It means everything that more than one called plural, but in Arabic plural form count from three, because for two things in Arabic grammar called “*dual*” to make different among singular, dual and plural. In Arabic, the singular to form the dual depends on the case, there is The Nominative Dual and The Accusative Dual, depends on the position of the word.

A Language therefore is not so much is a set of sentences, or of sentences patterns, as a set of much smaller pattern of formulation which in combination enables a speaker to produce sentence patterns.

To say that a language is a very large set of sentences is highly suspect way of speaking. If it were just this, no one could ever learn a language, and as a result, no language would exist. Moreover no description of a language in terms of sentence patterns if it were possible could ever account for the fact that people can produce sentences and new sentence patterns is precisely the most important feature of way speaker’s command of a language.

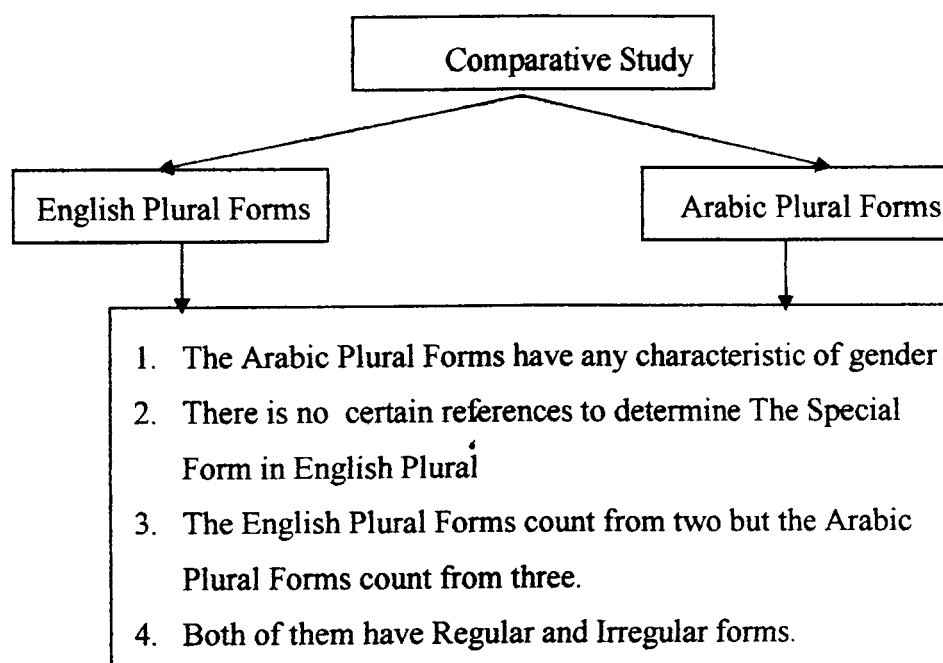
The task of grammar is to describe these constructional patterns, giving a statement, perhaps in the form of a rule, to cover each. As sentences are built of these construction, so a suitable selection of rules from the grammar will describe each sentence. It is only in some such sense that a grammar may be said to describe all the sentences of the language.

However, it cannot simply be assumed that if the informant rejects a sentence it is non grammatical. A non grammatical sentence cannot be used unless the language should change. If the distinction between grammaticalness and sensicalness can be drawn, the task of a grammar is to describe the grammatical sentences, sensical or nonsensical, clearly distinguishing them from the non-grammatical. The fact some grammatical sentences do not occur is a separate problem, part of it at least, falling in the domain of semantics.

If the discrimination between grammaticalness and other qualities of sentences is so difficult, it might be possible and desirable to side step the issue entirely. A grammar might be written to account for what people actually do say or might be expected to say in probable situations. But this would not really be a grammar at all, but a complete account of the environment and culture of the people.

To make clear the problem of this research, the writer will make a chart about it.





### E. Steps of Research

The research is commenced by making a through study with respect to the plural form in English also in Arabic and the scrutiny of everything having pertinence to it. For this purpose, it is performed by perusing and analyzing a good few of English books written in English, Arabic and Indonesian. The books are not only grammars but also the other one such as linguistics and dictionaries.

The second step is accomplished by investigating as many irregular plural as possible. This is done by poring over a few English and Arabic grammar books and English also Arabic dictionaries whether monolingual or bilingual ones.

1. Almunjid (1986) *Al Munjid Fil Lughah Wal A'lam*, Beirut Lebanon: Dar El-Machreq Sahrl Publisher.
2. El-Dahdah, Antoine, (1944) *Universal Arabic Grammar, Arabic-English*, Beirut:Librarie Du Liban.

3. Frank, Marcella, (1991) *Modern English a Practical reference guide*, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.
4. Fromkin, Victoria, David Blair, Peter Collins, (1999) *An Introduction to Language*, Australia: Harcourt.
5. Ghulamy, Musthafa, (2003) *Jamie el-Durus el-Arabiyah*, Beirut: Maktabah Asyriyah
6. Gleason, H.A., (1961) *An Introduction To Descriptive Linguistics*, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
7. Greenbaum, Sidney, (1991) *An Introduction To English Grammar*, Longman.and, (1976) *A University Grammar of English*, Longman.
8. Nikmah, fuad, (WY) *Qawaid el-Lughah*, Beirut:Dar el-Tsaqalan el-Islamiyah.
9. Rauf, Muhammad Abdul (1977) *Arabic For English Speaking Students*, Washington D.C : Dar El Fikr.
10. Swan, Michael, (1995) *Practical English Usage*, New York: Oxford University Press.
11. W. Wright, LL.D (1981) *A Grammar of The Arabic Language Volume 1*, Beirut: Libruire Du Liban.

The third step is performed by agglomerating the matters considered to be problem or difficulties by the people in learning English and Arabic plural forms.

Further step is performed by describing by the similarity and the disparity between English and Arabic plural form observed from many aspects.