CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Language has an important role in human life. As social creature, human need to interact with others, that's why they need a language as means of communication. Language in oral or written form allows human to say anything to each other and express their communication need. Without language, human will get difficulties when they want to share or express what they are thinking and feeling. Crystal (1992:212) in Srijono (2001:2) defines language as the systematic, conventional use of sounds, sign, or written symbols in human society for communication and self-expression.

In the world, however, there are various languages. From the varieties of language, English is the major language used as an international language. It is proven that many countries in the world determine to use it as the first or second language. For the developing countries, English is not only used for a communication in international contact but also for keeping abreast to the development of modern science, technology, international affair, politic, economy, education, etc. Therefore, mastering English is very important, moreover in this global era. People will be able to face the over changing world easily if they master English well.

As an international language, English has gained its popularity al over the world including Indonesia. In Indonesia, English has an important place

in the educational curriculum. English is regarded as the first foreign language to be taught at school. In the past English was only taught in secondary schools as a compulsory subject and as an additional subject at universities. In current years, however, the teaching of English has expanded into elementary school setting as a local content. It means Indonesian government considers the importance of learning English as an international language. That's why English is taught at school to prepare Indonesian people to participate in the global era.

Learning a foreign language, especially English, is considered difficult for Indonesian students because they will not only be taught about the skills in English such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing, but also about the language components like vocabulary, pronunciation, structure, etc, and those are something new for them. Therefore, the students who have learned English for years, it's not guaranteed that they will master English well. It might be caused by the differences of language aspects between English and their mother tongue or native language, especially the differences of structure.

Concerning with the structure, it is the basic knowledge and skill for understanding the language naturally constructed and used. It involves the combination and the arrangement of the word according to morphological and syntactical rules into phrases, clauses, or sentences. So, it can't be denied that we need grammar in our daily speaking and writing. Structure leads us to construct sentences which are grammatically correct to convey our message.

Each language has its own structure either in morphology or syntax. English with its own rules is quite different from Indonesia. The difference of structure makes the students have difficulties in learning English structure, and it may result in errors.

Based on the researcher's experiences when she taught simple past tense in SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Klaten, she knows that one of the problems faced by the students in learning structure is the difficulty in mastering English sentence patterns. The students are still confused although the researcher has given them clear explanation. It can be seen from their answer sheets in doing the exercises given by the researcher. After correcting their answer sheets, the researcher got the result that between 44 students there were no one who got totally correct answer, whereas the researcher just asked them to change the verb in the bracket into past form, and the items are only five. Most of the student's errors are caused by little comprehension of the verbal sentence and nominal sentence. They couldn't differentiate which sentences used full verb and linking verb (to be).

The other problems appear when the researcher asked them to construct WH-Question. WH-Question is a question that asks for information by using question words, such as *what, who, whom, whose, when, where, why, how,* and *which*. Constructing question especially WH-Question, is not an easy subject for them because it involves some tenses, whereas they had not understood yet when they should use present, past, and future tense although the teacher had given the material. Besides, the researcher had given a brief

explanation to the students before giving them exercises, but they still make errors. The following examples are some errors in constructing WH-Question made by the students based on the underlined word in the available sentence:

Answer   : John and Mary live in New York.

Question   : Where did John and Mary live?

Answer   : The visitor will order a cup of tea.

Question   : How often will the visitor order?

Answer   : I saw someone at the hospital.

Question   : Whom does you see at the hospital?

The students' errors above are caused by little understanding of the English structure, especially in understanding English sentence patterns. In constructing them, the use of auxiliary related to the forms of tenses is less comprehended by the students. Besides, the students have poor vocabulary. They do not know the meaning of the underlined word in the available sentence, so that they don't understand which question words they should use.

Based on the problems above, the researcher is interested in observing the errors made by the students in constructing question, especially WH-Question. The researcher believes that recognizing the students' difficulties can be a valuable contribution both for the teacher and the learners because in learning a foreign language, making errors is common, acceptable, and also an important part. By realizing their errors, the students will get feedback of the acquisition in learning process and the teacher will get benefit in improving their teaching method.

That's the reason why the researcher conducts this research paper under the title: AN ERROR ANALYSIS ON CONSTRUCTING WH-QUESTION MADE BY THE SECOND YEAR STUDENTS OF SMA MUHAMADIYAH 2 KLATEN IN 2006 / 2007 ACADEMIC YEAR.

B. Previous Study

Dealing with the topic of the study, the writer can inform that this study is not the only one. There are some researchers who have conducted the study on error analysis. Among others are written by Sunaryati (2004). Her research is entitled "*An Analysis of Grammatical Error Spoken by the Callers of the English Program Broadcast in PTPN Rasitania FM Surakart*a." In her study, there are two dominant sources of errors, interlingual and intralingual transfer. She describes many types of errors based on linguistic category and finds that the dominant error made by the callers is the omission linking verb (29, 79%).

The second researcher is Adi Kaharti (2005) who studied on "*An Error Analysis of the Written Production by the Third Grade Students of Public Senior High Schools in Sragen.*" In this research, she analyzes type of errors based on linguistic category. The result is that the dominant error made by the students is the addition of to be in the present tense with the total number of errors are 62 or 13, 93%. The sources of errors are interlingual and intralingual transfer.

In this research, the writer is going to do the similar research but in different classification or errors. Both of the researchers above used linguistic

category to describe the data, whereas in this research, the researcher uses surface strategy taxonomy to describe the errors made by the students. Because the previous study is only focused on the linguistic strategy, the researcher hopes that this research will enrich or complete the previous research.

C. Problem Statements

Based on the background of the study, the researcher would like to write down the problem statements as follows:

1. What are the types of errors made by the students in constructing WH-Question?

2. How is the frequency of each type of errors?

3. What is the dominant type of errors made by the students?

D. Limitation of the Study

It is obviously impossible for the writer to solve all of the errors made by the students in constructing WH-Question. Therefore, to make the study clearer, the researcher wants to limit them as follows:

1. The researcher concerns with the students' errors in constructing WH-Question based on surface strategy taxonomy.

2. The material that will be studied is focused on three tenses: simple present tense, simple past tense, and present future tense.

D. Objectives of the Study

This study is intended to meet the following aims:

1. To describe types of errors made by the students in constructing WH-Question.

2. To know the frequency of each type of errors.

3. To know the dominant type of errors made by the students.

E.   Significance of the Study

There are some expected benefits that could be acquired from this study. They are:

1. Theoretical benefit

    This study can contribute to the science of applied linguistics especially English Language Teaching.

2. Practical Benefit

    a. The result of the study is expected to give a clear description about the students' errors in constructing WH-Question, so that the researcher can explain or give information about how far the students had learnt the material.

    b. The result of the study can give useful inputs for the teacher to improve their teaching method or constructing more appropriate teaching material. It can be used to improve students' ability.

    c. The result of the study will help the students to overcome their difficulties in constructing WH-Question in order that they can avoid doing the same error.