A. Background of the Study

Language is always used in human communication either spoken or written in formal or informal condition. In daily life, people in every country use language to express their intention. It means that language is very important in human communication. By using language people can understand the intention of the speaker without any misunderstanding. Meriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary (2003: 699) in Brown (2007: 6) states that “language is a systematic means of communicating ideas or feeling by the use of conventionalized signs, sounds, gestures, marks having supported meanings”.

Human produce language unconsciously. It is supported by Pinker’s The Language Instinch (1994: 18) in Brown (2007: 6) who states the statement that “language is a complex, specialized skill, which develops in the child spontaneously, without conscious effort or formal instruction, is developed without awareness of its underlying logic, is qualitatively the same in every individual, and is distinct from more general abilities to process information or behave intelligently:.
It is known that language is used in communication. In communicating, people indispensable to make question. Every time and everywhere people communicate, question is always used. For example “What time is it?” “Where is Anna?” “Who is helping your mother in the kitchen?” etc. Even in greeting, people always make question like “How are you?”, “How do you do?” “Where have you been?” “What are you doing?” etc. in teaching and learning process both teacher and students certainly make interaction. Of course the interaction will be applied by question. For example “Have you understood?” “Could you explain the previous material mom?”.

Based on the explanation above means that question is always produced in communication even in every event. It is supported by Morishita and Harada (2015) who states that “effective language communication consists of a series of questions and responses”. It means that communication will be run well if there is appropriate question and respond. Morishita and Harada (2015) also add the statement that “both the ability to comprehend and respond to question sentences properly and the ability to produce question sentences quickly and accurately based on the interlocutors’ utterances are essential and indispensable in real-time communication”.

It is known that English is an international language. As Freeman-Larsen (1991: 1) state that English a second language for most of the people of the world, has increasingly become the international language for business and commerce, science and technology, and international relations
and diplomacy. English in Indonesia is taught as a foreign language. Therefore English is not used for daily communication in social intercourse.

English is a language which used widely all over the world. There are some countries use English as the second language and some other countries learn English as a foreign language like Indonesia. It is supported by Gebhard (2000: 2) who states that by EFL I mean English as studied by people who live in the country, such as Italy, Saudi Arabia, and Korea. Also Brown (2001: 116) adds that foreign language contexts are those in which students do not have ready-made contexts for communication beyond their classroom. It means that to comprehend question and respond in English are needed. Unfortunately the question pattern between Indonesian and English is different. The difference between Indonesian and English patterns of question make it rather difficult for Indonesian EFL students to comprehend English grammar especially English patterns of question.

Indonesian learners learn English is as a foreign language. It is known that a language which is learnt by EFL learners’ called interlanguage. Fauziati (2009: 157) states that interlanguage is a study on the language of the second language learners, which currently receives a wider acceptance in the literature of error analysis (EA). According to Adjemian (1976) in Fauziati (2009: 160) there are some characteristics of interlanguage, namely: permeability, systematicity, dynamicity, and fossilization. Three of them related to EFL learners’ in learning foreign language.
According to Dulay, et al (1982: 10) states the definition of second language acquisition as the process of learning another language after the basics of the first have been acquired, starting at about five years of age and thereafter. EFL learners’ have different stages, for example junior high school level, senior high school level, and university level. Each level produces different structure of target language. As Dulay et al (1982: 11) states that target language refers to the language being learned or taught.

Based on the theory of interlanguage, there are stages as the process of foreign language learner cognitively to determine the L2 structure. The stages are called developmental sequence. In the process of developmental sequence, of course learners produce incorrect grammar. Lightbron & Spada (1999) in Mahargiani (2015) state that “when grammatically incorrect utterances are made this is believed to show the learner’s true level of understanding of the rules and patterns of the L2”.

In acquiring English question, it had the development. According to Pienemann, et al., 1988, there are six developmental stages; stage one is single words and formulae. For example: how are you?. Stage two is SVO with rising intonation. For example: the tea is hot?. Stage three is Do-fronting, Wh-fronting, and other fronting. For example: do he work?, what the boy is throwing?, is the boy beside the bus?. Stage four is Pseudo-inversion, Yes/no questions with auxiliary inversion. For example: where is my purse?, have you car?. Stage five is Auxiliary second and Do second.
For example: where can he go?, why didn’t he understand?. Stage six is Tag questions. For example: He’s Polish, isn’t he? (Pienemann, et al., 1988).

During preliminary research in junior high school number one of Sidoharjo, Wonogiri, and senior high school number one of Sidoharjo, Wonigiri, the writer did three things. They are observation, interview, and gave try out to some students. Based on the observation and interview, the writer found that the students always ask question by using Indonesian. The students are still difficult to produce question both oral and written form. To know about the students’ patterns of questions, the writer gave try out to some students. The result of try out test was as follow:

7th grade students
Where you buy watermelon-watermelon yesterday?

9th grade students
Where you bought watermelons yesterday?

11th grade students
Where did you bought watermelons yesterday?

From the result above, the writer found the students’ acquisition in making Wh-question. Most of them were difficult in determining the appropriate tense like using to be and verb, and in arranging the words according to English pattern or called grammar. Students’ acquisition of Wh-question was also different in each stage.

From the explanation above, the writer interested in doing a research related to the students’ patterns of questions in seventh, ninth, and eleventh
grade, the difference pattern between three of them, and their developmental patterns of question. So, this study focused on grammar. Finally, the writer conducted a research entitled “the acquisition of Wh-question by EFL students’ learning English as a foreign language.

B. Research Question

How is the acquisition of Wh-question by EFL students’ learning English as a foreign language:

1. What are the patterns of question written by the seventh grade students of junior high school?
2. What are the patterns of question written by the ninth grade students of junior high school?
3. What are the patterns of question written by the eleventh grade students of senior high school?
4. How is the development of patterns of question written by the seventh grade students of junior high school, the ninth grade students of junior high school, and the eleventh grade of senior high school?

C. Limitation of the Study

Based on the problem of the research question above, the writer limited the problem. This study focused on the acquisition of WH-question by EFL students’ learning English as a foreign language.
D. **Objective of the Study**

To describe the acquisition of wh-questions by EFL students’ learning English as a foreign language:

1. The patterns of question written by the seventh grade students of junior high school.
2. The patterns of question written by the ninth grade students of junior high school.
3. The patterns of question written by the eleventh grade students of senior high school.
4. The development of patterns of question written by the seventh grade students of junior high school, the ninth grade students of junior high school, and the eleventh grade of senior high school.

E. **Benefit of the Study**

There were two benefits in this study. They were theoretical benefit and practical benefit. They were described below:

1. Theoretical Benefit

   The finding of this study was useful as a reference and comparison for the future study.

2. Practical Benefit

   For Students:

   a. The students would know the kind of patterns of question they have made.
b. The students were able to improve their understanding about the pattern of question in various tenses, and
c. The students could be easy in making question both oral and written.

For Teacher:
a. By reading the result of the study, teachers could enrich their insight about students’ patterns of question.
b. The teachers could find new method in teaching question.
c. The teachers could improve their teaching ability in English class.

For Reader:
a. This research was helpful in education area, namely to the other researcher who was interested in the acquisition of question and hopefully could enlarge the insight about the acquisition of question.

F. Organization of the Study
In this paper, the writer divided the content into five chapters in order to make this paper was easy to understand.

Chapter I was introduction. In this chapter the writer explained about the background of the study, research question, limitation of the study, objective of the study, benefit of the study, and organization of the study.
Chapter II was review of related literature. In this chapter the writer explained about previous studies and underlying theories.

Chapter III was research methodology. In this chapter the writer explained type of the study, object of the study, subject of the study, data, data source, technique of collecting data, reliability and validity of the data, and technique of analyzing the data.

Chapter IV was finding and discussion. In this chapter the writer described and explained the results from the research question.

Chapter V was conclusion, pedagogical implication, and suggestion. In this chapter the writer concluded from the result of this study. Then pedagogical implication related to this study was explained in this chapter. The writer also gave suggestion related to teaching and learning process especially to the learners and the teacher.