CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Research Background

Language is used to communicate, interact and convey meaning from one person to another. By using language, people can speak what they see and what they think about something and someone, it means that language is one of media to communicate. Chaer (2009) states that language is arbitrary sound symbol system which is used by people (or human society) to communicate.

There are many languages in the world; it is difficult for people who speak different languages to interact and to communicate. Nowadays, English has been recognized as an international language, everyone is demanded to be able to master English to compete in global world. The global community needs an international language to solve the gap of communication. English is the solution to occupy the necessity of the people to hold the international activity. It is the reason why people in the world want to learn English well. Wiratno (2003) says that English is used as an international means of communication. All of international activities such as seminar, congress, conferences and world trade use English as the official language.

Since Indonesia is a part of International communities, mastering English is important. In order to stay away from the isolation of the international relationship, there should be a great effort for the community to learn English. Besides, in fact, most of books supporting the development of science,
technology, art and literature are written in English. Many job vacancies require people to have an outstanding ability both in written and spoken English.

In Indonesia, English is considered as the second language (L2) and first foreign language taught at school. Acquiring and learning language are processes in which the learners will make mistakes and errors, even in their own first language. The difference of vocabulary, grammar, or system of language involves the learners a serious endeavor to be proficient in English. Hence, in early progress the learners commonly commit errors. Those errors certainly should be avoided, since the stage of mastering a language is measured from a perfect application of the system of language. Errors, then, become an offensive evidence that must be ignored.

According to Strevens (in Richard 1974: 4) errors should not be viewed as the problems to overcome, but rather as a normal and inevitable feature indicating the strategies that learners use. Inevitable features mean that errors made by someone in the process of constructing a new system of language can be analyzed.

By doing so, people may find some keys to understand the process of Second Language Acquisition. Based on the statement, we may conclude that the error analysis is needed to know the causes of the errors, to revise or re-correct the errors and to prevent the same kinds of errors (Tarigan, 1988: 273).

In academic environment, pupils learn about speaking, writing, listening and reading in English. Based on the fact, they still find it difficult to study English successfully. There are several schools in Indonesia which have introduced English since Kindergarten school. English course Institution is one of
the ways to solve the problem. The main problem is the language system differences between the first language and the second language. English grammar is one of difficult things for the students since there are new terms which are not found in the first language (Bahasa Indonesia). Thus, grammar skill is one of the important aspects in learning English as the second language. Students need to pay attention in grammar to compose good and understandable sentences in English. However, many students consider grammar as the most difficult part in studying English. It is because English language system is different from Indonesian language system.

This research is focused to analyze the grammatical errors made by the Second Grade Students of English Course, Gama Centre special for English. Here, in the English Course, the students get similar English lessons based on the curriculum of the formal school. The students have studied English since elementary school, but it is not enough to help the young learners to study English easier. They still face some problems of learning English. It is one of the reasons why they join in the English course. Conversely, the students have been studying English for years. The grammatical theory and practice have been taught. Most common problem they face is mastering the English grammar. The students attempt to create appropriate tenses, spelling and speaking. The grammatical errors are found during the observation. The fact is that English grammar is difficult to be applied correctly in students’ speech. It is because they should think before they speak up.
This research is focused to analyze the errors of Simple Past Tense form, while the errors and mistakes of the data other than simple past forms are removed. English tenses change due to time. Indonesian sentence structures do not have the same characteristic as English. The students’ first language and English language system influence the learning process. They tend to make errors in constructing and forming past tense sentence.

*He get a dog and a frog three weeks ago

*They see a wood and there a was frog

The sentences above are taken from the recorded data made by the Second Grade Students of Gama Centre special for English. In the first sentence above, the student made an error by misforming the irregular verb as the indicator of simple past form. The time adverb of the sentence above is three weeks ago, it shows an event that already happened. The verb and the adverb time of the first sentence above do not match to each other. Thus, utterance of the first sentence should be revised into ‘He got a dog and a frog three weeks ago’.

The student made an error by misforming of irregular verb and misordering in the second sentence above. The verb see is incorrect form in the past sentence. The verb see must be revised into past verb saw. The structure ‘there a was frog is wrong’ is incorrect. The student should put to be “was” after the word “there”. The second sentence above must be revised into ‘They saw a wood and there was a frog’.
The ungrammatical examples mentioned above prove the capacity of the student in using simple past tense form should be improved. The errors evidently reveal the students’ degree of English proficiency.

Based on the logical sense above, this research is focused to analyze the grammatical errors made by the students of English course, Gama Centre special for English. The object of the error analysis is the stories of the story book made by the second grade students entitled ‘Frog, where are you?’ by Mecer Meyer. This research is entitled: An Error Analysis on Simple Past Tense Made by Second Grade Students in their Stories.

B. Problem Limitation

The research is to describe the grammatical errors found in the students’ stories and to explore why these errors occur. It is also to describe the explanation of the rule of the grammatical errors made by the students.

This research is focused on various errors in constructing the Simple Past forms of female Second Grade Students in English Course, Gama Centre special for English. It is limited only to analyze errors in constructing Simple Past forms.

The Second Grade Junior High School Students in the English course were chosen by the researcher; because they are considered as the students who already have better understanding in English than the first grade students. The third grade students were not taken because they have to do more preparation for final examination. There are 15 female students taken by the researcher. The male
students were not taken by the researcher, because the numbers of them fewer than the female students.

**C. Problem statements**

Based on the background stated above, the problem statements are arranged as follows:

1. What types of Simple Past Tense errors are made by Second Grade Students of *Gama Centre special for English*?

2. What factors cause the errors made by Second Grade Students of *Gama Centre special for English*?

**D. Research Objectives**

The objectives of this research are:

1. To describe the types of Simple Past Tense Errors made by Second Grade Students of *Gama Centre special for English*

2. To observe the factors causing the Simple Past Tense Errors made by Second Grade Students of *Gama Centre special for English*

**E. Research Benefits**

The research is expected to be beneficial for:

1. Students: to give the students a description of problems they face in studying English and to give more lessons about the understanding of grammatical features which are useful for improving their skill,
especially in speaking proficiency. Therefore, they lack of understanding in grammar and try to solve the problems so that they can master English well.

2. Teacher: to provide information about how much students have learnt a second language, to give some suggestions that may be useful for the teachers to decide the best way to teach the student and to get the best expectation and the best result of their students.

3. Other researchers: to provide the references for the researchers with evidence how language is learnt and to inspire a good alternative to conduct researchers in language study.

F. Research Methodology

This research belongs to descriptive research. It refers to the method of solving problem by the research by collecting, classifying and interpreting data of the research.

The setting of this research is Gama Centre special for English, Klaten. The data are collected from the story telling made by the subjects. The subject of this research is the 15 female Second Grade Students of Junior High School.

The source of the data of the research is the Students’ errors of Simple Past Tense form from their stories of one picture story book entitled ‘Frog, where are you?’.

The multiple choices test and written exercises were conducted by the researcher during the observation. The researcher conducted the interview about
the grammar knowledge to the student. It is also used to find factors influencing simple past form errors.

The purposive sampling technique applied by the researcher only focused on the simple past forms. The grammatical errors collected by listening to the record, making list of the errors and then analyzing the data. Finally, the data were interpreted by the researcher.