

CHAPTER I  
INTRODUCTION



1.1 Background of the Study

According to the SMA English Curriculum of 1984, the SMA students should be able to identify, classify and apply the 'wish-clause' pattern.<sup>1</sup> The students should have the ability to distinguish between factual statements and 'wish-clauses', transform factual statements into 'wish-clauses', and make factual statements from 'wish-clauses'.

When the writer was still at the SMA, she and most of her friends often made many errors in 'wish-clause' such as the followings :

1. \*'I wish I can go to Europe', instead of 'I wish I could go to Europe'.
2. \*'She wish she know his name', instead of 'She wishes she knew his name'.
3. \*'I wish I was a boy', instead of 'I wish I were a boy'.

During her teaching-learning practice at SMA Dapena in Surabaya, the writer had the chance to interview the English teachers about the students'

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1 Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia, Kurikulum Sekolah Menengah Atas 1984, Garis-Garis Besar Program Pengajaran (GBPP) Program Inti dan Ilmu Sosial, Jakarta, 1987, p.72.

mastery of 'wish-clause'. They told her that errors of 'wish-clause' were often made by the students from year to year. Most of the students still found it difficult to use the 'wish-clause' pattern. As there was no research on errors that deal with 'wish-clause' pattern, the teachers did not have the data showing what types of errors were mostly made by their students. Hence, the teachers did not know which elements to focus when teaching the 'wish-clause' pattern.

Realizing the importance of such data and being interested in discovering the types of errors the students mostly made, the writer decided to conduct a research on errors of 'wish-clause' pattern.

## 1.2 Statements of the Problem

In line with the background of the study, the major problems investigated are formulated as follows:

1. What elements of 'wish-clause' pattern are most frequently misconstrued by the third year students of A3 program of SMA Dapena I Surabaya ?
2. What are the causes of 'wish-clause' errors mostly made by the students ?

In the attempt to answer the first major problem, the following sub-problems should be answered first :

1. Are the 'wish-clause' errors mostly in the form of the sentence subjects ?
2. Are the 'wish-clause' errors mostly in the form of the verb 'wish' ?
3. Are the 'wish-clause' errors mostly in the form of the negative marker ?
4. Are the 'wish-clause' errors mostly in the form of the auxiliary ?
5. Are the 'wish-clause' errors mostly in the form of the main verb of the 'wish-clause' ?

### 1.3 The Objectives of the Study

In line with the problem statements, the major objectives of this study were formulated as follows:

1. to determine the elements of 'wish-clause' pattern which are most frequently misconstrued by the third year students of A3 program of SMA Dapena I Surabaya.
2. to determine the causes of 'wish-clause' errors mostly made by the students.

In order to achieve the first major objective, the following sub-objectives should be achieved first :

1. to determine whether the 'wish-clause' errors are mostly in the form of the sentence subjects.

2. to determine whether the 'wish-clause' errors are mostly in the form of the verb 'wish'.
3. to determine whether the 'wish-clause' errors are mostly in the form of the negative marker.
4. to determine whether the 'wish-clause' errors are mostly in the form of the auxiliary.
5. to determine whether the 'wish-clause' errors are mostly in the form of the main verb of the 'wish-clause'.

#### **1.4 The Significance of the Study**

Primarily, the findings of this study are to arouse the awareness of the SMA teachers of English about the students' difficulties in learning 'wish-clause' pattern by providing the information about the high frequency of occurrence of errors.

Secondarily, the findings of this study are most likely to be useful for the teachers of English, especially those of SMA Dapena I Surabaya, to improve their techniques in teaching 'wish-clause' by knowing the causes of the identified errors. Hopefully, the errors which the students may make in learning this pattern can be prevented or minimized.

Finally, the findings are most likely to contribute more information in the field of the second language acquisition theory and research since the findings provide of how the 'wish-clause' pattern is learned.

### 1.5 Assumptions

This study was carried out under the following assumptions :

1. the students under study had already been taught the Simple Present Tense, Past Tense and Past Perfect Tense, due to the fact that this study included the students' ability to use the correct verb form required by those tenses.
2. the students under study had already learnt the personal pronouns because this study was also concerned with the students' ability to use the correct personal pronoun, especially used as the sentence subject.
3. the students under study were assumed to make errors of 'wish-clause' construction since making errors is considered a vital part in one's learning process.

## 1.6 Theoretical Framework

This study was based on the theories of Error Analysis, Contrastive Analysis, Interlanguage and the theory of 'Wish-clause'.

### 1.6.1 Error Analysis

Error Analysis can be used to investigate the various processes that contribute to interlanguage development.<sup>2</sup> It is a procedure which deals with selecting samples of learners' language, identifying the errors in the samples, describing and classifying these errors and finally evaluating the errors.<sup>3</sup>

In this study the theory of Error Analysis is used as a guidance to analyze the students' errors of 'wish-clause' pattern in terms of their nature and classification. Hence, the procedures as described by Corder, are used in the analysis of the subjects' errors (see chapter 2, section 2.1).

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<sup>2</sup> Rod Ellis, Understanding Second Language Acquisition, Oxford University Press, 1986, p.53.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. pp.51-52.

### 1.6.2 Contrastive Analysis

There are two hypotheses of Contrastive Analysis: the 'strong' and the 'weak'. The strong hypothesis states that the difficulties of the learner can be predicted by a systematic contrastive analysis.<sup>4</sup> Lado as quoted by Wardhaugh states that the strong hypothesis takes the position that a contrastive study will enable one to predict points of difficulty in learning because of differences between the two languages.<sup>5</sup> The weak hypothesis claims that where difficulties are evident from the errors made by learners, the comparison between the mother tongue and the second language may help to explain them.<sup>6</sup>

Hendra Tedjasuksmana states in his thesis that the theory of Contrastive Analysis is used to discuss whether the student's errors had anything to do with the

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 4 S.P.Corder, Error Analysis, Interlanguage and Second Language Acquisition in Valerie Kinsella ed., Language Teaching and Linguistics, Cambridge Univ Press, 1978, p.61.

5 Betty Wallace Robinett, Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, University of Minnesota Press, 1983, p.163.

6 Corder, loc cit.

interference of the learner's first language or not.<sup>7</sup> Following Hendra Tedjasuksmana, the present study also used the theory of Contrastive Analysis as guidance to see whether the 'wish-clause' errors result from the interference of the student's first language or not.

### 1.6.3 Interlanguage

Nemser refers to the same general phenomenon in second language learning but stresses the successive approximation to the target language in his term "approximative systems".<sup>8</sup> The concept of this term (interlanguage) refers to the structured system which the learner constructs at any given stage in his development.<sup>9</sup>

The theory of Interlanguage is used in this study as a guidance to interpret the students' wrong 'wish-clause' construction.

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 7 Hendra Tedjasuksmana, Errors in the Passive Voice Made by the Students of St. Louis I Surabaya, unpublished thesis, Surabaya, FKIP Universitas Katolik Widya Mandala Surabaya, 1989.

8 H. Douglas Brown, Principles of Language Learning and Teaching, Englewood Cliffs, Prentice Hall Regents, 1987.

9 Ellis, op cit, p.47.

#### 1.6.4 Theory of 'Wish-clause' Pattern

The subjunctive mood may express a wish, only after the verb 'wish'. Most of the indicative verb forms are used for the subjunctive mood, but the time that they express is not usually the same.<sup>10</sup> The forms used in the subjunctive are : Present (neutral time), Past (present time) and Past Perfect tense (past time). The past tense is used for something unreal or wished-for now.<sup>11</sup> The pattern:

Subject + wish(es) + subject + verb-2 (Past)

eg. 'She wishes she knew his name'

The past perfect is used to say that we regret something that happened or did not happen in the past.<sup>12</sup> The pattern:

Subject + wish(ed) + subject + verb-3 (Past Participle)

eg. 'I wished I had seen her'

In this study, the theory of 'Wish-clause' is used to correct the students' errors of 'wish-clause' pattern.

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 10 Marcella Frank, Modern English, Prentice-Hall, Inc Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1972, p.59.

11 Robert Lado, and Charles C. Fries, English Sentence Structure, the University of Michigan Press, 1960, p.208.

12 ibid, p.210.

### **1.7 Scope and Limitation of the Study**

Due to the limited time, the subjects of this study were limited to the third year students of A3 program of SMA Dapena I Surabaya who enrolled in the academic year of 1991-1992.

The statements which were used in the test items are limited to positive and negative statements since the 'wish-clauses' in the students' handbook were mostly in the form of these statements. They dealt only with the simple 'wish-clauses' pattern used in the Simple Present, Past, and Past Perfect tenses.

### **1.8 Definition of the Key Terms**

There are some key terms that need further explanation in order to avoid misunderstanding.

#### **1.8.1 Error**

There are various opinions about language learners' errors. Chomsky, for instance, divides errors according to their causes into two, namely: Performance errors, which are caused by factors such as fatigue and inattention, and Competence errors, which are caused by

lack of knowledge of the rules of the language.<sup>13</sup>  
 Corder, on the other hand, makes a distinction between  
 "error" and "mistake". According to him, performance  
 errors can be considered "mistakes" while the term  
 "errors" is reserved for the systematic deviations due  
 to the learner's still developing knowledge of the L2  
 rule system.<sup>14</sup> While Dulay et.al., who do not restrict  
 the term "error" to competence based deviations, claim  
 that error is any deviation from a selected norm of  
 language performance, no matter what the characteristics  
 or causes of the deviations might be.<sup>15</sup>

Since the writer did not intend to differentiate  
 between errors and mistakes, the definition of errors as  
 established by Dulay et.al., was used. Thus, in this  
 study, errors refer to deviations of 'wish-clause'  
 pattern in a sentence made by the subjects under study.  
 There is no distinction between the term "errors" and  
 "mistakes". They mean the same thing and they are used  
 interchangeably.

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 13 Heidi dulay, Marina Burt, Stephen Krashen,  
Language Two, New York, Oxford University Press, 1982,  
 p.139.

14 ibid.

15 ibid.

### 1.8.2 Wish-clauses

Wish-clauses are clauses which are used to inform someone that something is not as we would like it to be.<sup>16</sup>

### 1.8.3 Type of errors

'Type of errors' refers to what has been made wrong by the students. In this study, the writer classifies the types of errors into five, namely: Errors of Sentence Subject, Errors of the Verb 'wish', Errors of Negative Marker, Errors of Auxiliary, and Errors of Verb.

### 1.8.4 Cause of errors

In this study, 'cause of errors' refers to why the subjects under study made the errors, for example, they omitted the negative marker, or added the auxiliary.

### 1.8.5 Source of errors

'Source of errors' refers to why the subjects under study made those types of errors and their causes.

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<sup>16</sup> Raymond Murphy, English Grammar in Use, Cambridge University Press, 1985, p.74.

The source of errors can be from Language transfer, Learners' Strategy of Second Language Learning, etc.

### **1.9 The Organization of the Thesis**

This thesis consists of six chapters, namely, Introduction, Review of the Related Literature, Research Methodology, Data Analysis and Findings, Interpretation of the Findings, and Conclusion. Chapter I deals with the background of the study, statements of the problem, the objectives of the study, the significance of the study, assumptions, theoretical framework, scope and limitation of the study, definition of the key terms, and the organization of the thesis. Chapter II presents the review of related literature which will discuss the theories of Error Analysis, Contrastive Analysis, Interlanguage, the 'Wish-Clause' pattern, and review of the related unpublished papers written at the English Departement of Widya Mandala University. Chapter III concerns with the nature of the study, population and sample, the instrument, and the procedures of collecting and analysing the data. Chapter IV talks about the types of errors and their reasons, and the error occurences. Chapter V concerns with the interpretation of the findings. The last chapter, Chapter VI presents the summary and some suggestion concerning this study.