

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Like any other learning - teaching processes ; English learning - teaching process has many problems, too. This happens because teaching English as the first foreign language is fundamentally different from Indonesian in its structure, spelling, pronunciation, semantic and cultural meanings.

Learning English as the first foreign language is difficult for students in schools. One of their problems is discussed here, that is the conditional sentence problems undergone by SMAKr. Pirngadi I Surabaya students. As stated by Mary Finocchiaro (1974 : 2), that " every language has its own system or code ; that is its own characteristic way of putting sounds together in order to talk about situations or events in the presents, the past, or the future ". The students are often influenced by their native language and they often transfer their native language structural patterns or rules into the language they are learning, in this case, English (Richards and Sampson 1974 : 5).

Indeed, in learning a foreign language, one cannot avoid making errors. This is stressed by Brown who states that language learning, like any other human learning, is fundamentally a process that involves the making of mistakes (Brown 1980 :169).

From the writer's experience in the teaching practice program at SMA Kristen Pirngadi I Surabaya, she discovered a lot of mistakes in the second year (in A1 program) students' tests on conditional sentences that she was asked to check . The students were not able to use the conditional sentences in *statements* correctly and often mixed rules of conditional sentences that they had known.

For example :

The learner would write a sentence :

I would visit Mr. Abas if he is at home

instead of

I would visit Mr. Abas if he were at home

Sometimes, students even did not know what conditional sentences were. So, students just applied any rules that they had known although they had been taught the right rules before.

For example :

The learner would say :

If I were rich, I would bought a house

instead of

If I were rich, I would buy a house

The writer chose this study because she tried to find out kinds of errors that students had often made and explained the causes why those errors had still been made by students at SMAKr. Pirngadi I Surabaya. Besides that, the writer wanted to give some suggestions on how to overcome students' mistakes in order not to make those errors again.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Based on the background of the problem, the writer is interested in finding out :

- A. What kinds of errors do the students usually make in Conditional Sentences ?
- B. What are the causes of those errors ?

1.3 The Objective of the Study

Derived directly from the questions above, this study is intended:

- A). To describe kinds of errors in Conditional Sentences found in second year students of A1.1 and A1.2 program of " SMAKr. Pirngadi I " Surabaya.
- B). To explain causes of these errors.

1.4 The Significance of the Study

The results of the study are expected to give some contributions to the success of teaching English as the first foreign language in Indonesia. Closely related to the statement above, the writer attempted to supply some empirical evidence about :

- (A). Kinds of errors in conditional sentences found in second year students of A1.1 and A1.2 program of " SMAKr.Pirngadi I " Surabaya.
- (B). Causes of these errors.

1.5 Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to the analysis kind and the causes of errors in using conditional sentences excluding other variations of conditional sentences, such as : the word " if " replaced by " had " or " were " followed by the subject. This means that other analysis were not discussed. This study was done at A1.1 and A1.2 program at " SMAKr. Pirngadi I " Surabaya. They were homogeneous students with approximately the same academic competence and background knowledge of English. This data was collected in the afternoon and at school when students were having their classes so that they did not feel that the experiment became a burden for them.

1.6 The Theoretical Framework

The relevant theories used to analyze this study are ; the theory of Errors Analysis (EA) and the theory of Contrastive Analysis (CA).

1.6.1 Theory of Error Analysis (EA)

Error analysis is a procedure which involves collecting samples of learner's language, identifying the errors in the sample, describing these errors, classifying the errors according to their hypothesized causes, and evaluating the seriousness of the errors (Rod Ellis 1986 ; 51-52).

In this study, the procedure of Error Analysis is used as a guidance to analyze the students' errors in terms of collecting samples, identifying and describing errors, and classifying the errors according to the surface feature of the error itself.

1.6.2 Theory of Contrastive Analysis (CA)

Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis exists in two versions : the strong version and the weak version : The strong version claims that errors can be predicted by identifying the differences between L1 and L2 (Rod Ellis 1986 :23). After several empirical studies, however, some researchers like Dulay and Burt claime that a large proportion of grammatical errors can not be explained by L1 interference. In addition, Lee (1986), as quoted by Rod Ellis, reports that he experienced little interference from his mother tongue, English, when learning Chinese, just because the structures of the two languages are so different (Rod Ellis 1986 :34).

The weak version of Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis claims that Contrastive Analysis can be used to identify which errors are the result of interference (Ibid : 34).

1.7 Definition of the Key - Terms

To clarify the terms used in this thesis and to avoid misunderstanding on the readers, the following definitions are given :

1.7.1 Errors

1. Error is a noticeable deviation from the *adult grammar* of a native speaker, reflecting the *interlanguage* competence of the learner (Douglas Brown 1980 : 165). Error also refers to the systematic deviation due to the learner's skill developing knowledge of the language rules. This error deviates from a selected norm of language performance (Ibid : 165).

2. Dulay et al use the term " errors " to refer to any deviation from a selected norm of language performance, no matter what the characteristics or causes of the deviation might be (Dulay 1986 : 139).

1.7.2 Conditional Sentences

A conditional sentence is a sentence consisting of two clauses : a dependent clause beginning with *if* and a main clause or an answer to the *if* clause (Artono Wardiman 1986:185).

In this study, the writer uses the *three main types* of Conditional Sentences :

- The first type : To describe a future situation which may or may not occur.
- The second type : To describe a situation which is contrary to the fact now.
- The third type : To describe a past situation which is contrary to the fact in the past.

The writer excludes the other variations of conditional sentences, such as : "had" or "were" + subject , eg :

- Had I been rich, I would have bought a car
- Were I a bird, I would fly everywhere

1.8 Assumptions

This study is based on the following assumptions :

1. The students of the two classes A1.1 and A1.2 were about the same age (between 17 or 18 years old) and the same *academic competence* .
2. The condition of the room, air, teacher and situation of the classrooms used for the experiment were the same.

1.9 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter I is broken down into 9 sections; Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, The Objective of the Study, The Significance of the Study, The Theoretical Framework, The Definition of the Key Terms, The Assumptions and The Organization of the Thesis. Chapter II explains briefly The Review of the Related Literature and researches done by scientists and students of Widya Mandala University especially in Error Analysis, Contrastive Analysis and Conditional Analysis. Chapter III is broken down into : Research Design, The population and Samples, The Instrument of the Research and Procedure of Collecting the Data. Chapter IV deals with : Data Analysis, Findings, and Interpretation of the Findings. While chapter V serves : Summary, Conclusion, and Suggestions.