

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Background of the Study

Human beings use and need language every day. They can express everything in their mind by using language. Language follows every human's activity. If someone cannot communicate with the other, s/he would find everything in his or her world difficult; therefore it is important to see clearly what language is. According to the Webster's New World College Dictionary (1986) language is human speech or the ability to communicate by human speech, and the vocal sounds used in spoken or the written symbols for them. By the ability to communicate, human beings are able to express their ideas, to live and work. Without language, problems in society may appear legions and misunderstanding. Sapir (1921:8) defines language as a purely human being and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotion and desires by mean of voluntarily produced symbols. The function or role of language may be differently interpreted. Thus, Hall (1968:158) says that language is an institution where by a human being communicates and interacts with one another by means of habitually used oral-auditory, arbitrary and symbols. In the light of this definition, language is viewed as is a system of arbitrary, vocal, symbols, this permits all people in a

given culture, or other people who have learned the system of culture to communicate and interact.

Language as a means of communication is not only used for daily communication but also for its great concern with other field. Language has so many interrelationships with variable aspects of human life. According to Bloomfield (1933:3) language plays a great part in our life. English is the most important language in the world. There is a term which says that if one wants to know the world one must know English. English has the most speakers in the world. Many citizens in other nations study English as their second language.

In Indonesia, as one of the developing countries, English is learnt as a foreign language. Indonesia are constituted by ethnic groups such as the Javanese, Bataks and others. The Bataks as one of the biggest ethnic groups in Indonesia and the biggest in Sumatera Utara also learn English for special purposes such as tourism, academic and occupational purposes. Learning English for the Bataks is not easy because the patterns, structures and grammar of English are viewed as very different by the Bataks. The differences can be seen in the pattern of the sentences.

In general, sentences differ in terms of mood, i.e positive sentence, negative sentence, and interrogative sentence. This addresses questions in English and Toba barak Language (TBL). An interrogative sentence is one that introduces a question. Newby (1987:69) introduces two types of question in English. They are yes-no question type and wh-question. It is called yes-no question because they

expect a yes or no answer. Whereas wh-question is a question started with question words (who, what, which, whose, when, where, why, and how). It is also used to signal the need for further information. The essence of studying how questions are formed in English and TBL is that learners can gain benefit the comparisons, thus enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of learning the languages.

In TBL according to Sibarani (1997:139) based on the formation question sentences is divided into nominal question sentences, temporal question sentences, numeral question sentences, adjectival question sentences, special question sentences, causal question sentences, and verbal question sentences. TBL also has yes-no question. Sibarani's descriptions are structurally based.

However, questions can also be described functionally. Specifically the question can also be studied from the perspective of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). SFL is first proposed by M.A.K Haliday in 1961 in Australia. SFL views that language has meta function covering experiential, logical, interpersonal, and textual functions. This study is related to the interpersonal function. Interpersonal function is also known as exchange information in one language. The sentence or information is signed with mood and residue. Mood consists of two parts (1) the subject, which is a nominal group, and (2) the finite operator, which is part of a verbal group. The finite element is one of a small number of verbal operators expressing tense (e.g. is, has) or modality (e.g. can, must). The Residue consists of functional elements of three kinds: Predicator,

Complement and Adjunct. There can be only one Predicator, one or two Complement and an indefinite number of Adjunct up to, in principle, about seven. Detailed description about the SFL theories is devoted in chapter 2.

Similarities and differences of questions in English and TBL are assumed to be inherent in the two languages. This study specifically addresses the two aspects. The importance of studying questions in the two languages lies on the relevance to learning the two languages. It is specifically expected that by knowing the similarities and differences of questions in the two languages, the learners can effectively and sufficiently learn English or TBL.

1.2. The Problem of the Study

In relation to the background of the study, the problems are formulated in the form of the questions as follows:

1. How are questions realized in English and TBL?
2. What are the similarities of English and TBL questions?
3. What are the differences of English and TBL questions?

1.3. The Objective of the Study

In relation to the problems, the objectives of this study are

1. to describe the realizations of questions in English and TBL ,
2. to describe the similarities of English and TBL questions in structure, and

3. to describe differences of questions realizations of mood in English and TBL.

1.4. The Scope of the Study

The study is focused on questions in both English and the TBL. The questions are realized in interrogative moods. Thus, the study also involves interrogative moods of sentences. Realizations of questions in moods of the two languages share similarities. However, they also differ in some aspects. Both the similarities and differences of questions in the two languages are addressed in this study.

1.5. The Significance of the Study

The findings of study are expected to provide relevant information for

1. those who want to add their knowledge of questions in the TBL.
2. those who want to find out the similarities and the differences of the use interrogative sentences in Toba Batak Language and English.
3. the Bataks who want to study English as foreign language.
4. to enrich the study of English and the TBL.