A. Background of the Research

One of the purposes of the educational process is increasing the students’ ability to become a good young generation. This process cannot be separated from the elements which are involved in the educational process, such as the teachers, the curriculum, the materials, the methods of teaching, and etc. The success of teaching learning process depends on how effective and efficient those elements are integrated.

Teachers of English seem to have a variety of problems, such as creativity and good communication from the teachers to teach English grammar well. Some teachers have an aversion to study and teach it. And the others may feel indifferent yet believe it is necessary, and thus do what they can understand it and present it effectively to their students. In learning English, we can make students aware of how experience with any form of communication, in communication, it is needed for students to learn language well. In learning language there are some skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing, and they cannot be separated because if we want to communicate well in English, we must use them well. In learning English especially in Indonesia, there are some difficulties in how to use and to communicate well. As we know English is not our language, but it is a
foreign language, and there are a lot of differences. One of the differences is grammar, we can see from this one, in learning English grammar is also important besides another, such as vocabulary, pronunciation, and etc.

Grammar is a description of certain organizing aspects of particular language. By studying the grammar of English, students will have some knowledge in producing either in spoken or written language because grammar usually includes phonological (sound), morphological (word composition) and syntactic (sentence composition) points. English grammar often becomes a problem for foreign learners. In Indonesia, for example, students tend to apply Indonesia grammar in using English, either in spoken or written form. Many of students often make grammatical mistakes when they speak or write English, so their sentences do not make sense at all.

Nowadays, most of students are still facing the difficulties for understanding grammar well especially in question and how to compose it. The writer saw that phenomena from the result of observation. We know that questioning is very important speech acts in daily conversations. Besides that, the question system or manner in Indonesia and English languages are different. Therefore, structures must not be ignored, because meanings (ideas, thought, opinions, and feeling) can not be conveyed without them. So the writer is interested in studying it.
In this case, the writer uses tenses; those are simple past and simple present. By those tenses, the students can compose the question correctly because they have learnt them.

This research is focused on the students’ competence, especially competence in composing questions at the second grade of MTs Negeri Karanganyar Purbalingga in the academic year 2009/2010. The writer chose that school as object of the research because he has done observation there. Thus, based on the observation, the writer saw the phenomena that there were many students especially the second grade often made grammatical error in composing question in spoken. For example: in Indonesian meaning “apa yang kamu lakukan tadi malam?” they say “what do you do last night?”. So, that question is incorrect because they ask something in the past, and they should use did before subject. The right question is “what did you do last night”. Etc.

B. Reasons for Choosing the Topic

Grammar is very important for the students to learn. It is used to compose sentences or questions and answer questions correctly without any misunderstanding so they can communicate well.

C. Problems of the Research

Based on the background of the research, the problems are:
1. How good is the students’ competence in composing questions at the second grade of MTs Negeri Karanganyar Purbalingga in the academic year 2009/2010?

2. What kinds of errors are mostly made by the students in composing questions?

D. Aims of the Research

The aims of this research are:

1. to know the students’ competence in composing questions,

2. to find out the kinds of errors made by the students in composing questions.

E. Clarification of the Terms

To understand the topic more easily, essential terms of this research are clarified as follows:

1. Students’ Competence

Student is a person, usually over the age of 16, who is studying at a college or university. A person who observes or has a particular interest in something. (Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, 1995: 1187). According to Ramelan (1992: 46), competence refers to a person’s knowledge of his language or the mastery of the system of rules of his language. It is supported by Nurgiyantoro’s statement
he said that competence is a person’s knowledge about system, structure, vocabulary and also the all of aspect in that language like understanding and comprehending. So, students’ competence is students’ ability to do something well in studying.

2. Composing Question


F. Contribution of the Research

The writer hopes that this thesis has the contribution especially for the teacher: Give valuable information about the students’ competence in composing question as well as their errors in composing question. So the teacher can determine a future step for teaching the students.