

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 The Background of the Study

Language has been defined various. According to Darjowidjojo (2005) “Language is an arbitrary system of verbal symbols used by members of a community language to communicate and interact with one another, based on the culture they have in common”. And language itself is part of the human’s life and it cannot be separated from our life because everybody uses it to communicate and interact each another. We use spoken language every day, face to face, as means of communication, and written language allows us to record and hold on to our history across generations. Language itself is very complex (Clark, 2003). Clark also added that language allows us to coordinate what we do with others, relay information, find out answers, and carry out everyday activities – gossiping, making puns, writing memos, reading newspapers, learning histories, enjoying novels, greeting friends, telling stories, selling cars, reading instructions – the list is unending. Using language seems as natural as breathing or walking.

The fact, babies are not born talking. They learn language, starting immediately from birth. Since children are not born speaking, they must learn language. According to Archibald & O’Grady (2001) “Nothing is more important to a child’s development than the acquisition of language. Most children acquire language quickly and effortlessly – giving the impression that the entire process is simple and straightforward”.

Children typically acquire their native language naturally and spontaneously at a very young age. The emergence of early grammar can be predicted from children's vocabulary size and composition (Bates *et al.*, 1994; Bates, Bretherton & Snyder, 1998). Moreover Chomsky (in Papalia and Old, 1990:75) defines children in a normal life from two until six years old will acquire language with structure and vocabulary. This is possible because since their birth, they have been equipped with such a device called Language Acquisition Device (LAD). A theory says that human has language devices in their mind seems acceptable up to present. It is the means which the child learns input from parents and babysitters. The LAD lets the children analyze the language they hear and extract the rules of grammar that allow them to create new words to help them to verbalize their intentions.

Ingram (1989;435) states that the first sentence of children consist primarily of words which belong in the adult language to lexical categories such as noun, verb and adjective. And more over he describes that morphemes tend to be acquired later than lexical morphemes and are usually associated with development beyond the period of the first word combination. In line with Ingram statement, Brown in Krashen (2009) reported that children acquiring English as a first language tended to acquire certain grammatical morphemes, or functions words, earlier than others. According to Warlaumont and Jormulowicz (2011) acquisition of regular inflectional suffixes is an integral part of grammatical development in English and delayed acquisition of certain inflectional suffixes is a hallmark of language impairment.

Meanwhile According to Dardjowidjojo (2000), the acquisition of morphemes by five year old Indonesian child in terms of the acquisition affixation can be seen as follows;

**Table.1 The acquisition of affixes by five year old children**

Phase	Basic word	N-	nge-	meN-	-in	-kan	-i	di-	ter-	-an	ke-	ber-
1	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	+	+	-	-	-
3	+	+	-	-	+	-	-	+	+	-	-	-
4	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	+	+	-	+	+
5	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	+	+	+	+	+
6	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
7	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

*Source: taken from Dardjowidjojo's research*  
 \*"+ " refers to the affixes that have been acquired, "- "affixes that haven't been required

The data above are taken from Dardjowidjojo's research towards his granddaughter Echa. He described that Echa has passed seven phases from age one year to five year old. In the first phase Echa has acquired basic word only. And in the second phase she has acquired not only basic word but also affixes such as suffix -in, prefix di- and ter-. She was able to acquire more affixes in the seventh phase when she was at the age of five. From the data above we can see that Echa was able to acquire both formal and informal affixes when she was five years old. The formal affixes that she has acquired namely (*men-*), (*ter-*), (*ber-*), (*-kan*), (*-an*), (*di-*), (*ke-*) and (*-i*). The interesting found is that she never made mistakes in choosing the prefixes she used. She has never been found to say \**berbawa*, \**menjalan*, \**ngetulisin*, \**ngekirimin*, or \**ngengirim*. (\**referes to the words that is never been used and sounds awkward in bahasa Indonesia*)

In line with Dardjowidjojo's findings above, the same findings also found in the researcher's preliminary data which was taken on May 24<sup>th</sup> until May 30<sup>th</sup> 2015 towards four children which consists of two males and females in terms of the acquisition of affixed words by five year old children as follow:

**Table.2** Affixes that are acquired by five year old children

Child	Age	Affixes		
		Prefix	Suffix	Circumfix
KY	5;1	<i>di-, me-, se-, ter-, ber-, ke-</i>	<i>-in, -an, -kan</i>	<i>ke-an, per-an, di-i</i>
KL	5;7	<i>di-, men-, se-, ter-, ke-, pe-</i>	<i>-in, -an</i>	<i>ke-an, di-in, , ng-in</i>
AZ	5;2	<i>di-, men-, ber-, ter-</i>	<i>-in, -an, -kan</i>	<i>ke-an, ng-kan, di-kan, ng-in, di-in</i>
DM	5;5	<i>di-, men-, se-, ke-</i>	<i>-in, -an, -i</i>	<i>me-i, ke-an, di-in</i>

The preliminary data above shows that the acquisition of affixes by the children are various. All children are able to acquire both formal and informal affixes when they are five year old. The formal affixes that have been acquired from the data above are (*di-*), (*me-*), (*se-*) (*ter-*), (*ber-*), (*-an*), (*-kan-*) (*-i*), (*ke-an*), (*per-an*), (*ke-*). The data above also shows that there are some differences between male children and female children in acquiring prefixes. The female children used more prefixes than the male children. But all children have the same ability in acquiring the suffixes meanwhile they have different ability in acquiring the circumfix as can be seen in table 2 above.

Furthermore, the researcher also found some affixes that were not found in Dardjowidjojo's finding such as the following affixes;

- a. *di-i* : *dibelii (is bought), dimaini (is played), dikeringi (is dried)*

- b. *di – kan* : *dimasukkan (is entered), didebidikan (stand)*
- c. *ng – in* : *ngapain (what are you doing)*
- d. *Ng- kan* : *ngalahkan (defeat)*
- e. *ke-an* : *kekuatan (strength)*
- f. *per-an* : *permainan (toy)*

The interesting found that the children were able to use the affixes based on its function. They know when they have to use prefixes, suffixes or circumfix in a sentence. Below is an example of the affixes acquired by the children in their sentences as follows:

**1.a**

- Aunt : Dimas, kalau pagi mandi sendiri? (*do you take a bath by yourself everymorning?*)
- Dimas : Kalau mamak gak masak, dimandikan mamak, kalau masak mandi sendiri. (*If my mom does not cook, I will be bathed by my mom but if she cooks I will bath by myself*)

**1.b**

- Mother : Kaya lagi makan apa? (*What are you eating Kaya?*)
- Kaya : Gorengan (*fried food*)
- Mother : Siapa yang goreng? (*who friend it?*)
- Kaya : Ibu itu tadi disana yang goreng (*that woman over there did*)

The two examples above (1.a and 1.b) show that children ages five year old are able to differentiate the usage of affixes in a sentence. It is very clear here that Kaya (1.b) knows when she should put prefix *-an* and when she shouldn't put it in a sentence to the word "goreng" (*fry*) where it can change the meaning and the word class which refers to the derivational morpheme. According to Lieber (2009) derivational morpheme refers to the morphemes that drive to new words and sometimes it changes category. *Goreng* and *gorengan* are two different words

class, *goreng* means *fry* in English which refers to the verb while *gorengan* means *fried food* in English which refers to the noun.

Based on the preliminary data above, the researcher was interested to conduct a deep research especially in the acquisition of affixed words by five year old Indonesian children and how they acquired them.

The differences of this study towards Darjowidjojo's research also lies in the method used. This research used Cross Sectional Method while Dardjowidjojo's research used longitudinal studies. Cross sectional method is more advantageous in this study because it requires short time, while research longitudinal studies requires a relatively long time. Meanwhile, the difficulty of cross sectional study is that it requires many subjects if we compare to the method of longitudinal studies that require relatively little research subjects.

Another research in relation with the acquisition of affixation has been conducted by Wachyudi (2011) who concerned on The Acquisition of Inflection and Derivation Affixes by 3 to 4 years old children. And the results showed that prefix *di-* (100%) is mostly used by children, the second is suffix *-in* (60,9%), and the third is prefix *se-* (12,5%) while circumfix *ke-an* is rarely emerged.

Different from Dardjowidjojo (2000) and Wachyudi (2001), this study examined only on the acquisition of formal affixes by five year old Indonesian children. The writer hoped that this study can complement the existing research results and to be useful knowledge for the reader to know much about the acquisition of affixation by five year old Indonesian children.

## 1.2 The Problems of the Study

Based on the background above, the research problem was formulated into the following questions:

- a) What formal affixes are acquired by the five year old Indonesian children?
- b) How do the five year old male and female children acquire the formal affixes in Bahasa Indonesia?

## 1.3 The Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study were:

- a) to find out the formal affixes that are acquired by the five year old Indonesian children.
- b) to find out the way five year old male and female children acquired the formal affixes in Bahasa Indonesia.

## 1.4 The Scope of the Study

This study only focused on the acquisition of formal affixes by five year old Indonesian children which consist of two females and two males. This study only focused on the three formal affixes in Bahasa Indonesia namely; *prefix*, *suffix*, and *circumfix*. The writer restricted the study of the three affixes based on the observations from the children utterances. Not only that the writer also wanted to know how the five year old Indonesian children acquired the formal affixes in Bahasa Indonesia.

### 1.5 The Significance of the Study

This study was expected to provide several benefits, namely:

- a. This study examined the acquisition of formal affixes in Bahasa Indonesia and how the five year old Indonesian children acquired them in their sentences. Theoretically, this study was expected to be the empirical evidence of the ability of children aged five years in acquiring the Indonesian affixed words and how they acquired them, this study was expected to be useful for descriptive linguistic science, precisely in the Acquisition of affixed words in Indonesian language.
- b. Practically, the results of this study were expected to provide information to other researchers regarding the acquisition of affixed words in Bahasa Indonesia and how the children acquired them. This research was expected to pave the way for other researchers who show an interest in obtaining child affixation. In addition, the researcher obtained the benefits and knowledge regarding the acquisition of affixed words by the five year old children.