

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Language is uniquely human gift of evolution. It is subtle, abstract and cultural phenomenon that no doubt come in the human biological system at a relatively later date. One of the remarkable characteristics of human beings is that every single one acquires language at a very young age. And later on the acquisition occurs and develops in its social context. The study of language acquisition potentially can tell us a great deal about the psychological and intellectual functioning of the children as they mature. The use of language is considered to have a tremendous affect on the children's relationship with themselves and environments.

Babies are not born talking. They learn language immediately from birth. They hear sounds and words, meaning and constructions. They need to know what to use, where and when, how to integrate language with other modes of communication, how to make them understood and how to understand others, (Clark, 2003:1). During the infants or very clearly childhood period, children learn to express things by using speech sounds. Whenever they feel hungry, thirsty or hurt, they produce speech sound such as crying, which is also a part of the process of communication, where the infants start to use their articulation to communicate with other people because they are still not able to say perfectly what they want like adults do.

Human beings are born to speak, with an innate gift for figuring out the rules of the language used in the environment. Environment influences the children in conversation. Infants need other people such as their caretakers, parents, friends and people who live around them to motivate them to communicate through crying, cooing, uttering sound or meaningful words which help them to be able to carry out conversations and to communicate their needs and wants with other people in the community. Darjowidjojo (2000:49) explains that the adjustment in the caretakers speech register served two functions, namely to facilitate understanding and to get the child to be involved in the conversation.

Clark (2003:12) mentions that the first language acquisition requires a comprehensive look at where and when children acquired the language. It integrates social and cognitive approaches on how children analyze, understand and produce sounds, words and sentences as they learn to use the language to cooperate and achieve goals.

In the process of acquiring the language, there are some problems which are occurred that make the product of the acquisition is not obtained normally, it is called language acquisition disorder. The child who suffers from the disorder will find it difficult to utter the language he has acquired. Language acquisition disorder is a disturbance in the acquisition or application of the rules of the language (Michael, 2006). Other definition is stated by Schirmer (2004), language acquisition is an abnormal development of verbal and/or written expression and reception.

Indonesia is the fourth populous nation in the world and Indonesian (Bahasa Indonesia) is the official language of Indonesia which is used most

extensively as a first language in urban areas and usually as a second or third language in more rural parts of Indonesia. Indonesian is the language used in radio, television and magazine. It is the language of government and business administration, media, literature and everyday life in the big cities.

There exist a huge number of Indonesian words that can be classified into two types of words. They are content words and structural words. Content words are words that convey meaning and can be understood. Kinds of content words are nouns (buku, meja, kursi, lemari and susu), verbs (minum, makan, bermain, melihat and membaca), adverbs (selalu and sekarang) and adjectives (cantik, tampan, tinggi and pendek).

Another type of words is structural words which mean words that exist to create grammatical or structural relationship among words. They are simple and small words. The meaning of a sentence will not change if the structural words are omitted. Kinds of structural words are prepositions (ke and di), pronouns (aku, kamu, mereka and dia) and conjunctions (dan and sementara).

The adults influence the development of children's language. The children carefully follow the movements of mother's mouth and try to imitate them. They distinguish voice and showing a particular preference. They are sensitive to the rhythm and intonation of adults talk (de Boysson-bardies, 1999:37). Parents provide predictable repeated situations in which meaning of utterances is clear to the child. And they effectively teach their ideas over to the children. The children never make conversation with other people seriously, but they acquire the language and share the knowledge with other people.

One of the requirements in the process of studying a child's language acquisition is to understand the child's family background. It is an important fact to be studied so that the development can be well understood and will give a great deal of contribution to the process of a child's mental development.

Every child has different cognitive development. It means even at the same ages they do not have the same abilities in acquiring verbs or nouns. Their abilities are different in acquiring verbs and nouns in their lives and beside that their abilities influenced by two factors, namely internal and external factors.

In this proposal the writer will do a research that consists of two Toba Batak sons. Those are at the same ages, but they come from different family backgrounds.

The process of acquiring a language is regarded as a very complex and interesting to be studied. The writer is very much interested in conducting a research on two Toba Batak children. The writer is very curious to observe the acquisition of words specifically the acquisition of verbs and nouns, and to discover whether the two Toba Batak children differ in the terms of the total number of verbs and nouns.

### **1.1 Problems of the Study**

In relation to the background that has been presented previously, the problems of the study are formulated as follows:

1. How are the contents of verbs and nouns acquired by two-year –old Toba Batak children?
2. How do they acquire verbs and nouns in their daily activities?

These questions will be answered through the analysis of the data, which will be obtained in the research.

### **1.1 Objectives of the Study**

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

- 1). to investigate the contents of verbs and nouns acquired by Toba Batak Children.
- 2). to compare verbs and nouns acquired by the Toba Batak children.

### **1.2 Scope of the Study**

The process of a child's language acquisition is a broad area to be studied because there are so many aspects to be covered. In this research, the writer limits his observation only on the acquisition of verbs and nouns by two-year-old Toba Batak children. The children who will be observed are two Toba Batak sons who speak Bahasa Indonesia.

### **1.3 Significance of the Study**

Findings of this research are expected to the relevant and valuable inputs that can enrich the study on the development of language acquisition. It is expected that the findings can show significant relevancy to the theoretical and practical aspects.

Theoretically, the research findings can provide a basis for a further research on different stages of the children's language acquisition. Practically, on the other hand, this research can be made as guidelines for adults, teachers

especially parents who are interested in the process of introducing new words to young children as related to the theory of language acquisition. It will be also very useful for a reference in assisting or facilitating their children in the process of language acquisition.

Findings of this research will be expected to give answers to some of the problems faced in the process of language acquisition, especially by two-year-old children, in the aspect of acquiring early words. While for the future researchers, this research will be useful for them as guidelines in conducting more in-depth studies.

