

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 The Background of the Study

Studies of language acquisition in children concentrated on counting the number of words children had in their vocabularies at a given age. The study of language acquisition by children is very interesting. It will make better understanding about the development of the children's language and knowing uniqueness of children in producing a language. Chomsky (1965) defines children in a normal life from two until six years will acquire language with structure and vocabulary. This is possible because since the birth, they have been equipped with such a device, called Language Acquisition Device (LAD). The Language Acquisition Device lets children analyze the language they hear and extract the rules of grammar that allow them to create new word. It is the reason why then adults or parents think that the early age the is good period for their children to acquire English. But the ability and speed in acquiring language is not relatively same among the children.

Consequently, language acquisition can be seen as a natural process that will occur to every normal child. Each child will follow similar stages in language development although they have different speed. Language acquisition will be impossible when a child is not interacting with his environment. Through social interaction with the family members and those are in the community, the child will acquire the first and second language. Therefore, each child acquires

language as part of natural process and as a results of social interaction in the community.

There is a wave of English building up. Within a decade nearly a third of the world population will all be trying to learn English at the same time. English is as the dominant medium of communication around the world. In the world of globalization era, we have realized that English plays most important role. Nowadays, In Indonesia some international institutions, companies, schools hospital, hotels, shopping centres etc. They used English as the main language in their communication. Commonly, the information and technology use English. Without having knowledge in English, we can not operate computer and internet. Most of import products which are sold in market are written in English. The tourism department needs people who are qualified in English. Moreover trading era also requires English.

Thus, the importance of English has pushed many parents to realize that they need to introduce English earlier to their children. Parents sent their children in language schools at early age, convinced that the earlier they start learning, the better they understand language especially English language. Most of parents who push their children to totally immerse to the English language will send their children to those schools which provide teaching learning with full of English. Children who are sent to this school are expected to be able to speak or communicate by using English language.

When visiting some international school standards, we will see the young children are about three to five years old are able to speak English. They use English to express their feeling in the simple way. The children who learnt in PrimeOne School are expected to be able to speak or communicate in English. Those children who study at PrimeOne preschool are come from different ethnics group. In this study the four ethnics namely Chinese, Bataknese, Javanese and Indian. The children are taught by using full of English language during teaching learning in school. The writer can see that all of the children from different ethnics who study there acquire English sentence. Moreover, the writer was interested to observe the acquisition of English sentence by the different ethnics children. The problem dealing with language acquisition here that the kindergarten students with different ethnics children of PrimeOne School Medan have different ability in acquiring English sentence.

The majority of research on the acquisition of language focuses on children`s early utterances, the order in which they emerge and the kinds of errors they contain. Two complementary methods of data collection are used naturalistic observation and experimentation. In the naturalistic approach, the researcher observes and record children`s spontaneous utterances. One type of naturalistic investigation is the so-called diary study, in which a researcher keeps daily notes on child`s linguistic progress. A more sytematic way to collect naturalistic data involves regular taping sessions to gather samples of the child interacting with teacher or friends. Here is a transcript, containing a fragment of a conversation among students with the different ethnic groups and their teacher in the classroom

that I have observed on the first week of March, 2015 in one of the preschool class in PrimeOne School :

Teacher : Good morning everybody  
Students : Good Morning ms  
Teacher : How are you today ?  
Students : I m fine, thank you and you?  
Teacher : I m fine too, thank you dear  
Everybody listen to me,....I wanna ask you, did you brush your teeth this morning ?  
Agnes : Yes ms  
Vanya : I ....  
Tasya : I already ms.  
Jesslyn : I brush my teeth in the morning and before sleep at night ms....  
Teacher : Very good... you have to brush your teeth twice in a day in the morning before going to school and at night before going to sleep  
Gulraz : I can not ms.  
Jason : Why can not. ?,I... I do by myself  
Teacher : Two thumbs for Jason  
If you can not do by yourself Gulraz, ask your mommy to help you to brush your teeth, okay

The conversation above has shown the acquisition of English sentences by kindergarten students with different ethnic groups, Jesslyn and Jason are Chinese students, Agnes is Bataknese student, Tasya and Gulraz are Indian students and Vanya is a Javanese student. They are able to utter some sentences in descriptive, interrogative, imperative and exclamation forms.

Therefore, the writer realizes that the acquisition of sentence patterns of the children are really different which inspires her to conduct a research on language acquisition. Moreover, Rowland (2014:4) states that it is also important to note that differences across languages are not the only differences between children. There are also individual differences between children acquiring the same language. Some children are faster and other are slower and some children

are born with cognitive impairments that prevent them from acquiring language without a lot of specialist help. This phenomenon has led the writer to make a research at the age of five years old children. Despite any possible weakness, this point of view the writer intends to focus on the declarative, imperative, interrogative and exclamation sentences patterns. It will give a great deal of knowledge about the psychological and intellectual functioning of the children as they have been born with some form of innate knowledge.

## **1.2 The Problems of the Study**

Based on the background above, the problems of the study can be formulated as following questions :

1. What type of English sentences are acquired by the kindergarten students of different ethnic groups at PrimeOne School ?
2. How do the kindergarten students of different ethnic groups at PrimeOne School acquire the English sentences ?
3. Why do the kindergarten students of different ethnic groups at PrimeOne School acquire the English sentence in the way they do?

### **1.3 The Objectives of the Study**

In line with the research problem, the objectives of the study are :

1. to find out the types of English sentences acquired by the kindergarten students of different ethnic groups at PrimeOne School
2. to find out how do the kindergarten students of different ethnic groups at PrimeOne School acquire the English sentences.
3. to find out why the kindergarten students of different ethnic groups at PrimeOne School acquire the English sentences in the way they do.

### **1.4 The Scope of the Study**

The study of children language acquisition is a broad area to be studied because there are so many aspects to be discovered. In this study, the writer only focused on the English sentences acquisition by the children of different ethnic groups. The types of English sentences that will be analyzed are limited on declarative, imperative, interrogative, and exclamation sentences. The different ethnic children that will be analyzed here are Chinese, Batakese, Javanese and Indian ethnic group. The children who were observed kindergarten students at the age 5-6 years old at PrimeOne preschool Medan. They had been observed for one month.

## 1.5 The Significances of the study

The findings of the study are expected to contribute significantly to different parts theoretically and practically.

Theoretically these finding will be helpful for;

1. To add teacher`s knowledge in the process of English language acquisition and as guidelines for them in the process of introducing English to the students.
2. To enrich knowledge and notice toward children`s language development.

Practically these findings will be helpful for;

1. To enable the teachers to recognize the students`s ability from different ethnic in acquiring English sentence.
2. To help the other researchers who are interested in gaining some knowledge about English sentence acquisition by kindergarten students or children.