

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of Study

Language is the source of human life and power. It is a means of communication using arbitrary vocal symbols or sound production. It has a very important role in creating interaction among human beings. Fernandez and Cairns say that language is used to communicate, to interact socially, to entertain, and to inform (2011: 3). It means that human being especially children can acquire the language and develop it in order to avoid misunderstanding among others in communication. Basically children are not taught language. They can extract the rules from the language around them. For the most part, the acquisition of words and sounds has been investigated independently. Fromkin, Rodman and Hyams (2003: 534) state:

A basic cause of change is the way children acquire the language. No one teaches a child the rules of grammar. Each child constructs the rules of her language alone, generalizing rules from the linguistic input she receives.

Moreover Clark states that they acquire the language through a process of acquiring, starting immediately from birth (2009: 1). This acquiring process of course is not done in the class as a formal way where the children learn any subjects by the teacher's help. The children acquire the language with their own ability without the process of teaching. The behaviorism approach believes that the infant is like a blank sheet. The infants will repeat vocal speech sounds over

and over again, and then they will imitate the adult's vocalization (Purba, 2010: 2). It means that children's language acquisition is started from a sound. They can develop their language acquisition process by the help of environment is in their surrounding such as things or human being like mother, father, sister, and the others. They hear and imitate the sounds of their surrounding people who sometimes cannot understand their obscure speeches.

In social of their interaction, children communicate to convey their message or feeling in order that the others know what they want although the children's pronunciation and words are sometimes perfect and still not perfect yet. Jakobson in Ingram (1989: 191) sees phonological acquisition as the result of the interaction of the child's internal structure (or innate knowledge) and the linguistic environment. In other words, Chomsky in Clark (2009: 369) proposes that the human capacity for language was innate. Based on the statements that human's ability to communicate with others relate to their innate capacity and the stimuli from others which make people, adults, and children are able to communicate. The social of interaction and cognitive development can affect and determine the children language acquisition how actually children get their language faculty especially on their phonological acquisition.

Thus, when the children use their phonological acquisition, they tend to make errors in producing sounds. These normal speech errors are known as phonological process. Therefore the writer considers that investigating this phonological process issue through the word production of a child who has a high curiosity to talk about everything is interesting to do. By the age of two, whether

the child is producing 200 or 300 distinct 'words', he or she will be capable of understanding five times as many, and will typically be treated as an entertaining conversational partner by the principal caregiver (Yule, 2010: 174).

Furthermore, Clark says that about age two on, more conversational exchanges are initiated by children than by adults, so children more often chose the topics that get talked about. In becoming participants in conversation, children need to know how to engage in this joint activity, how to contribute, and how to take turns. Namy and Waxman in Clark explain when children aged 1;6 and 2;2 are taught either gestures or words in reference to novel objects, the younger ones responds as if gestures and words could serve equally well to refer to instances of object categories (2009: 32). That kind of case is the main background for this study to be observed because there are many two-year-old children who have articulation problems when they produce and pronounce the words. Some children have difficulty with one sound, while the other children have difficulty with a whole group of sounds.

Many people consider that all children have misarticulations while their language is developing. These phonological processes are efforts by the children to simplify words until they are learned correctly. The thing that is often heard by the writer is the difficulty in pronouncing words which consist of consonant. For example, they delete one consonant or change one consonant into another one. Then, the writer of this study concentrates and focuses on the aspect of phonology because the development of sounds production in children's speech is a necessary phase to communicate with others.

Due to the phenomenon, the writer is going to observe their pronunciation to find out their ability in their Indonesian pronunciation containing consonant. Ingram in Fletcher and Garman who has proposed the phonological process' theory in the speech of young children to describe the phonological patterns found in the words used by children and this process includes: substitution process, assimilation process, and syllable structure process (1997: 223-231). Through that phonological process theory, we can understand how the process of phonological acquisition happens.

As a reference for the study, the writer uses two similar studies to help her analyzing the case. The first one is done by Brawis (2006), a graduate student of Airlangga University. His paper is about phonological acquisition of a two year old Javanese Indonesian child named Rayan, as his subject. The second is done by Fetty (2011), a graduate student of Muhammadiyah University. Her paper is about the characteristics of phonological process on consonant sound of simplification made by ten children, as her subjects.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Based on the background of the study above, the writer would like to begin her study with two questions of the problem, as follows:

- 1.2.1 What is the phonological process of two year old Indonesian children's speech found in producing Indonesian consonant sounds?
- 1.2.2 How are the phonology productions of the word acquired by two year old Indonesian children?

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The following are the aims of doing this research, the writer wants to find out the phonological process of two-year-old children with the Indonesian language background in pronouncing words which is chosen as the sample words containing consonant sounds and also describe the phonology productions of the words acquired by two years old Indonesian children.

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

Children's language acquisition is sometimes difficult to be understood the others, the writer hopes to everyone who surrounds them especially their parents always give motivation, improvement, and correction to children's speech by drilling if there are wrong spelling. This process will help the children to pronounce better early in language acquisition well and of course help the people to understand their speech. This study will be useful enough for other researches who are interested in Phonology.

### **1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study**

In order to concentrate on the object of the study, the writer decides the scope of the study is the first language acquisition especially children's phonological acquisition. This study is for two-year-old Indonesian children in producing their words containing consonants. They are in the writer's niece who lives close to her home, her girlfriend's and neighbor's children.

## **1.6 Definition of Key Terms**

Based on the background of the problems, the writer thinks that it is a need to describe some terms that relates to this study in order to make the reader understand more. They are:

### **1.6.1 Language acquisition**

It is how an infant acquires its first language. The process of developing competence in a language. The term is used for infants acquiring their native language (first language acquisition) and for those learning a second or foreign language (second language acquisition). (Field, 2004: 3).

### **1.6.2 Phonological process**

It operates on sounds or features of sounds, changing them in certain ways, e.g., assimilating them to each other, substituting for them, deleting them (Lust, 2006: 38). It is a systematic procedure used by children to make adult words pronounceable. They enable children to produce an approximation of an adult model. In other words, for a child, phonological processes are a way of getting from an auditory model to speech production (Owens, 2012: 216).

### **1.6.3 Phonology**

It is the language-specific selection and organisation of sounds to signal meanings (McMahon, 2002: 2). On the one hand, it refers to a description of the sounds of a particular language and the rules governing the distribution of those sounds (Akmajian et al, 2001: 109).

#### 1.6.4 Consonants

Consonants are a subset of the set of human speech sounds (Philip, 2008: 32). They are nearly always movements at the beginning or end of a vowel (Ladefoged: 2001: 101).