

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1. 1 Background of the Study

The acquisition of morphology in children occurs after they acquire the vocabulary and begins when they are in early two years old (Dardjowidjojo, 2000). The acquisition of morphology includes the affixation. In Indonesia, the affixation is one of the aspects of morphology. The affixation can be the complex process, for example, an Indonesian word such as *jalan* that it is followed by Indonesian affixes; it can be *berjalan*, *menjalani*, *dijalankan*, *perjalanan*, and more. It implies that the word *jalan* changes to many forms and meanings.

According to Clark (2003), the type of language can influence the system of the language that is acquired by children and it can make a language harder and easier to acquire. For example, sound-letter correspondence of Bahasa Indonesia is more consistent than sound-letter correspondence of English language. In Indonesia, the consonant of *c* in *cicak* will be pronounced the same. Meanwhile, in English, the consonant of *c* followed by consonant *h* in *chemist* will be pronounced [k]. This pattern may give some ease or difficulty to the children when they pronounce the words.

Some words of particular language acquired by children do not appear in adult. For instance, three or four year old children do apply a morphological rule

especially in the verb that they utter. This phenomenon can be seen in some examples. First, the children use the regular past tense *-ed* in irregular verbs such as *goed* for *went*, *doed* for *did*, *falled* for *fell*, and more. It is one of the best examples of overgeneralization (Santrock, 2001). The second example is that Saragih (2008) found that there is a morphological error happened in the students of junior high school like *kata petugas itu, "di sini melarang merokok"*. That morphological error happens in the use of affixed verbs in active and passive sentence. The third example is that the children add the plural *-s* to exceptional nouns such as *mans, foots, peoples*, and more.

Another phenomenon in which the verb that the child uses does not appear in adults happens to a six-year-old Indonesian child who uttered the sentence: *aku ingin makan bersatu*. He said *bersatu* which means *sendiri*. In this case, the meaning of this sentence is that he wants to eat the food alone; he does not want to eat together. He used the word *bersatu* from the word *berdua* which means the quantity of noun or *dua orang*, *bertiga* that has meaning *tiga orang*. Those interesting phenomena can be the evidence that children produce and acquire the morphology, especially in the use of affixes in verb. Those phenomena of language acquisition especially in affixed verbs acquired by the children are worth analyzing.

Some previous studies have analyzed acquisition in morphology field. Wood, Kouider, and Carey (2009) analyzed the acquisition of singular-plural morphology. They took some infants as the subjects to be analyzed. Infants that became their subjects are between 18 months and 25 months in average. In doing

the research, they used noun to combine with singular-plural and used familiar and novel noun as well. They found that infants have more interest to object that they are familiar with rather than unfamiliar.

Rahayu (2010) analyzed language acquisition of 4-5 year old children. The aim of the research was to know about phoneme and vocabulary acquisition that were acquired by 4-5 year old children. The research applied the theory of behaviorism since it is focused on the development of children language around. The result of the research is that there are changes of vocal and consonant phoneme. There is also the use of vocabulary from Indonesian language to English and Javanese.

Tyler & Nagy (2007) analyzed the acquisition of English derivational morphology. In their analysis, they took students in fourth, sixth, and eighth grades in order to assess different aspects of their knowledge of derivational morphology. The aim of the study is to establish a complete picture of children's acquisition of English derivational morphology by distinguishing different aspects of knowledge about morphology, and by examining the effects of various task demands on children's ability to demonstrate their implicit knowledge.

There are some differences that distinguish previous studies above from this study. The difference between the first related study and this research is the focus of acquisition. The first related study focuses on singular-plural morphology with the involvement of some infants to be analyzed as the participants, yet in this research the writer only involves a child to be the subject. The gap also occurs

between this research and the second related study. The second related study focuses on phonology including vocal and consonant phoneme, while the third related study analyzes the acquisition of morphology involving some subjects in fourth, sixth, and eighth grades. On the contrary, this study only involves one subject as the participant. The difference can also be found in the way the writer analyzes the data.

Based on the phenomena that have been explained and the differences between three previous studies and this study, the writer is interested in analyzing the language acquisition in children especially in morphology. It is because sometimes children may produce or utter some words derived from the morphological rules that they have understood and those words may be new for them. In addition, since research about kindergarten student that can use affixes well is rarely conducted, this is why morphological acquisition research is important. The writer chooses a kindergarten student because when a child is in kindergarten, he or she acquires a lot of new words that may be considered incorrect.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problems**

Based on the background explained above, the writer proposes the statement of the problems as follows:

1. What affixes are used in verbs produced by a five year old kindergarten student?
2. What kind of affixes does the student frequently use?

### **1.3. Objectives of the Study**

Answering the statement of the problems above, the objectives of this study are:

1. To identify and explain the types of affixes and their meanings used in verbs produced by the student.
2. To identify the most frequently used affix by the student.

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

This study is expected to give contribution to the study of Linguistics particularly in English Department, Faculty of Humanities Universitas Airlangga. The writer hopes that this research can give the knowledge especially in the analysis of morphological acquisition by identifying and explaining affixes used by kindergarten student. This research also can be used as material consideration for teacher to make teaching material particularly for word choice in the dictation for kindergarten students. It will be better if the teaching material is based on the research.

### **1.5. Scope and Limitation**

This research of morphological acquisition is limited on the identification of affixes. Specifically, the writer focuses only on verbs uttered by the child. Due to the limited time, the writer does not focus on either the nouns or the adjectives.

### 1.6. Definition of Key Terms

- **Morphology** : The part of linguistic field that study about word structure and the influence of the changes of the word structure toward the word class and the means of it (Putrayasa, 2008).
- **Affix** : A bound form that can be added at the beginning, the end, or the middle of the word (Richard, 1992).
- **Prefix** : An affix that put at the beginning of a base (Putrayasa, 2008).
- **Suffix** : An affix that put at the end of a base (Putrayasa, 2008).

***CHAPTER II***  
***LITERATURE REVIEW***