

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### I.1. Background of The Study

Children's language is different from the adults'. The sentences or utterances they produce are less perfect or complete compared with the adults' ones. Those imperfection or uncompleteness could be in pronunciation, vocabulary, syntactic-semantic structure, etc.

Various theories have been proposed to explain how children acquire the adult language. There are those who think that children merely imitate what they hear. Imitation is involved to some extent, of course, but the sentences produced by children show that children are not merely imitating adult speech. Even when children are deliberately trying to imitate what they hear, they are unable to produce sentences that cannot be generated by their grammar (Fromkin & Rodman, 1988:375). Thus although children acquire their language by imitating from the adult, they may not produce sentences the same with the adults'. They do not merely imitate what they hear from them, but they still adjust it with their present linguistic knowledge. They will produce their own sentences that may be different from the adults' sentences in accordance with their stage of grammar development. They may make mistakes in producing their sentences

but we cannot say that they are 'mistakes' because they reflect the grammar at a certain stage of development (Fromkin & Rodman, 1988:379).

As stated above, the ability of children in their language is not as complete and perfect as the adults'. Linguistic knowledge develops by stages, and it is suggested, each successive stage more closely approximates the grammar of the adult (Fromkin & Rodman, 1988:368). On certain stage, children are able to produce sounds only. Next, they develop their ability in producing words, sentences and so on, until they master a fully formed grammar.

Children's utterances are not simply words that are randomly strung together, but from very early stage reveal their grasp of the principles of sentence formation (Fromkin & Rodman, 1988:374). At first, children may create simple sentences with clear and simple syntactic relation also. By the development of their linguistic knowledge, they are able to improve the length of their sentences, so is their grammar acquisition until they are able to create sentences as complete and perfect as the adults'.

However, the children need not reach the linguistic knowledge as complete and perfect as the adults in order to be able to communicate with the society that is a larger unit than their family only. If they are able to

speak in words and grammatical structures understood by the addressee (listener), they are ready to communicate with the society. As stated by Elizabeth B. Hurlock in 'Children Development', when communication is by speech, it must be in words and grammatical structures, the listener can understand (1978:163).

The above reason becomes the writer's consideration to use children's language as the object of the study, that is, how they create their sentences that can be understood by the society in accordance with their linguistic knowledge in their present age.

In general, language is used as a tool of communication. It is used to convey or transmit some information and thought from one person to another; to make interaction and communication among people in the society; and to establish social relationship. Even for children, they use their own language to communicate with their parents at first and then with their society. It is clear that there is a close inter-relationship between language and society (Trudgill, 1974:4).

As a social phenomenon, language is always influenced by social condition of the society. It is closely tied up with the social structure and value system of the society. One of the effects of society on language is stated by Peter Trudgill in 'Sociolinguistics' that the social environment can also be reflected

in language and can often have an effect on the structure of the vocabulary (1974:27). It means that the different social environment can result in the difference of linguistic varieties the society uses. While, the diffusion of linguistic feature through a society may be halted by barriers of social class, age, race, religion or other factors (Trudgill, 1974:35).

Social class is one of the social factors which can influence the linguistic varieties of the society. The social class may cause the different linguistic varieties they use. Further, Trudgill stated that different social groups use different linguistic varieties (1974:35).

In the case of children's language, firstly, most of them acquire their language from their parents. Parents are the child's first teachers (Kweldju, 1996:5). Their parents teach them to speak, read and write. With such a reason, the writer would like to know whether children's language is also influenced by their parents' (family's) social class.

In this study, the writer concerns with the study of those children's Indonesian sentence structures in accordance with their different social classes.

People living in Surabaya are from various levels of social classes. They are from lower, middle and upper classes. Besides that, Surabaya is a multilingual area because of the ethnic varieties of the people living

there. At least, people are able to speak their ethnic language, such as Javanese, Madurese, Makasarese, Sundanese, etc; and Indonesian language as their National Language. Those languages are their first and second language. In the case of children, there are also many children that are accustomed to speaking their ethnic language as their mother tongue in daily communication. Or, they speak Indonesian as their first language. It depends on what their parents have taught them since they began to speak. When they come to school, the children must be able to master Indonesian well because it is compulsory to use it as the language in education. All of them, either they speak their ethnic language or Indonesian as their first language, have to master Indonesian well. It is the reason why the writer choose Indonesian as the object of the study.

## I.2. Statement of The Problem

The problems that will be solved dealing with the background of the study are :

1. How are the syntactic structures of the Indonesian sentences used by the children of lower and middle social classes ?
2. What are the differences of sentence structures the children have ?

### I.3. Objective of The Study

The aim of the research is to give information and description about the syntactic structures of the Indonesian sentences used by children of different social classes and the differences of sentence structures those children have.

### I.4. Significance of The Study

This study is expected to give a meaningful contribution to the linguistic studies. The first is to *Pure Linguistics*, in which, this study is expected to be able to give information and description to the readers studying about sentence structures, especially about the structures of the Indonesian sentences used by the children. In this case, the study concerns with the study about Syntax. The second is to *Sociolinguistics*, in which, it is expected to be a useful information to the readers who would like to study about the linguistic varieties used by the society, especially children, in relation with their social class.

For the society, especially the parents, the writer hopes that they are able to get information about the creation of the children's Indonesian sentences structurally in their present age, and make it as a consideration of the children language development, especially the development of their Syntax.

### I.5. Scope and Limitation

Because this study concerns with the study of sentence structure, it is closely related to pure linguistic study, especially about Syntax; and because this study relates the language and social class difference, it is also related to the study of Sociolinguistics.

As this study concerns many aspects, it is impossible to observe all of them. So, in doing this research the writer limits the study, so that the analysis could be more specific. The study just analyzes the Indonesian grammatical sentences made by students in class, that is in a formal situation. From all of the children who can be observed, the writer limits the population of the study to the second year students of a state elementary school in Surabaya and they include children of the lower and middle classes.

The considerations are, first, because in their school age, they are in the early formal education, but they are able to use Indonesian, either in speaking or writing, as the expression of their thought and ideas. Second, they are able to communicate with the society. And third, the two social classes compared, lower and middle classes, are the classes of the society which are often found living together in the same area in Surabaya. However, the upper class usually lives in a certain area separated from the two other classes of society. So, it

is difficult to compare all of the three social classes and the writer decides to compare only the two classes of lower and middle.

### **I.6. Theoretical Framework**

The writer uses two approaches in making this study: syntactic and sociolinguistic approaches. The syntactic approach is used to analyze the Indonesian sentence structure of the children; and sociolinguistic approach is used to relate their linguistic variety with their social class difference and find out the differences of their sentence structure.

#### **I.6.1. Syntactic Approach**

Syntax is the study and rules of the relation of words to one another as expressions of ideas and parts of the structures of sentences; the study and science of sentence construction (Hill, 1969:211).

About sentence structures, Francis W. Nelson (1958 : 292) mentioned about the four basic types of syntactic structure. All larger structures are simply combinations of these; no matter how complicated a structure may be, it can always be analyzed in terms of these four. Those in group 1 are structures of modification, whose component parts are a head and a modifier. Those in group 2 are structures of predication, their two components being



a subject and a predicate. Those in group 3 are structures of complementation, their two components being a verbal element and a complement. Those in group 4 are structures of coordination consisting of equivalent grammatical units joined often but not always by a special kind of function word.

The four different structures are identified by simple symbols placed between the two immediate constituents.

### 1. Structures of Modification

The component parts are a head and a modifier. Modification is indicated by an arrow  $\longrightarrow$  pointing from the modifier toward the head :



The modifiers of the structures of modification can be put before or after the head.

If noun as head, the modifier could be : adjective, noun, verb, adverb, prepositional phrase, and function word.

If verb as head, the modifier could be : noun, verb, adjective, adverb, and prepositional phrase.

If adjective as head, the modifier could be : 'qualifier, noun, verb, adjective, adverb, prepositional