CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

## I.1. Background of the Study

Language of children is different from the adults' in perfection and completeness. The sentences or utterances they produce are less perfect or complete compared with the adults' ones. Furthermore, children linguistic knowledge, especially grammatical knowledge about their language is less than adults'.

Children do not wake up one morning with fully formed grammar in their heads or with all the rules of linguistic knowledge. Normal children recognize their linguistic knowledge within a process of language development through time (Menyuk, 1969:8). Children hear sentence fragments, false starts, speech errors, and interruptions; no one tells them "this is a grammatical utterance and this is not". Somehow the adult grammar is acquired (Fromkin and Rodman, 1988:375).

Related to the language acquisition of the children, various theories have been proposed to explain how children acquired the adults' language. There are those who think that children form rules and construct grammar.

> "It appears that the child is equipped from birth with the neural prerequisities for language and language use, just as birds are biologically "prewired" to learn the songs of their species. Our linguistic abilaty permits us to acquire any human language to which we are exposed." (Fromkin and Rodman, 1988:377).

The nonrandom mistakes children make, the speeds with which the basic rules of grammar are acquired, the ability to learn language without any formal instruction, and the regularity of the acquisition process accross diverse language and

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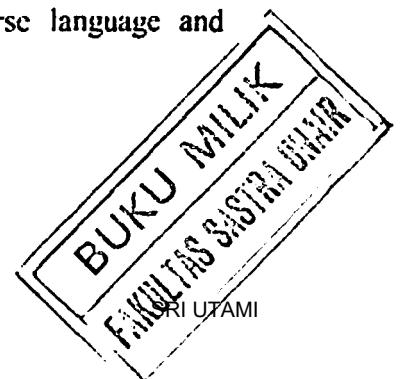
environmental circumtances have proved the fact that their linguistic ability permits them to acquire their language.

Another theory is innateness one introduced by Noam Chomsky in his book titled *Aspects of The Theory of Syntax*. It is argued that children must be born with an innate capacity for language development. The human brain is "ready" for language, in the sense that children are exposed to speech, certain general principle for discovering and constructing language automatically begin to operate (Chomsky, 1965:59).

During their linguistic development, children seem to form the simplest and most general rule they can from the language input they receive. The knowledge of the rule is then used to produce words, phrases, and sentences that after a process of trial and error, correspond to the adults' speech (Fromkin and Rodman, 1988:379). They look for or overgeneralize the rule of their language grammar which is able to be grasped in accordance with their present age.

Children do not learn the language "all at once". Linguistic knowledge develops by stages and it is suggested that each succesive stage more closely approximates the grammar of adult language (Fromkin and Rodman, 1988:368). On certain stage, children are able to produce sounds only (phonological development). Next, they enlarge their capability of producing words and phrases (morphological development), and finally they are able to construct the simple sentence with simple syntactic relation also (syntactic development).

In the syntactic development, children are able to produce two-word combinations, grammatical morphemes, and sentence structures consecutively (Taylor, 1990:290). Toddlers before age 2 begin to put two (or three) words together in one utterance, most of which can be interpreted in context, such as *'no down'* and

'more car'. Children initially do not use grammatical morphemes but gradually learn to use them over a period of years. Shortly after age 2, children start putting their ideas into three-constituent sentences. Between age 2 - 5, they keep increasingly the number of constituents and clauses to express increasingly differentiated and complex interpersonal functions and sentence-meaning relations. By the development of their linguistic knowledge, they are able to produce sentences as complete and perfect as adults'.

Children do not produce utterances simply by words that are randomly strung together, but from very early stage reveal their grasp of the principles of sentence formation (Fromkin and Rodman, 1988:374). At once they produce and construct simple sentences with simple sentence structures and phrase structure rules also. As the ideas to be conveyed become complex, so do the sentence structures that express them. They produce sentences with a variety of sentence structures, progressing from simple structures with a few constituents to complex ones with several constituents.

Along with the ability to produce grammatical sentences, children must develop the ability to use syntax as a clue in comprehending a sentence. Initially they may not need much of this ability, as they interpret utterances in rich situational contexts (Taylor, 1990:309). Precisely because they are human, children come into the world knowing quite unconciously, to recognize the processes which operate on the structure of the sentences in order to be able to communicate with the society (Jacobs and Rosenbaum, 1968:28).

As a communication system, language is associated with a message (the meaning) and a set of signs (the soundspof language) (Palmer, 1976:5). In communicating with others, children will connect the sounds which are produced in

a sentence with the meaning itself. In other words, they know or understand the deep and surface structures with its transformations which relate these structures. When children begin to communicate with others through their sentences they produced, it means that they must somehow connect continuous stream of noise with meaning; they must somehow relate the sound to meaning; they attempt to find a meaning in sound (Jacobs and Rosenbaum, 1968:18). Further, children must find out the relation between the meaning of a sentence that is conveyed by its deep structure and the form of a sentence that is given by its surface structure. Children's innate knowledge is available for them to recognize the transformations which relate deep structures and surface structures. The transformations which are firstly grasped are elementary transformations.

Theoretically, it would seem logical to suppose that transformations are a part of the children's grammar in some forms at the beginning stages of language acquisition since it is the aspect of syntax which allows for the possibility of an infinite set of utterances and also allows for expressing different meaning using the same base structure rules. Moreover, Veit (1986:251) states that transformational syntax provides accurate descriptions of children's subconscious knowledge about their language. The basic transformations postulated as being present in the fully developed grammar are used by children throughout the age range during the age three to seven years old (Menyuk, 1969:76).

Children also use their innate knowledge to recognize which of the elementary transformations are used in the transformations of their language. They also construct the particular transformations of language to which they are exposed. The facts explain that once children have discovered the particular transformations

of their language. Then, they can interprate certain grammatical structures of their language (Jacobs and Rosenbaum, 1968:28).

In this study, the writer takes children's language as the object of the study, that is how they use the elementary transformations in constructing Indonesian sentences that can be understood by society in accordance with their knoweledge in the present age.

As the object of this study, the writer chooses Indonesian language which is the first language of the respondents since language acquisition of children closely concerns with the ability of children to acquire their native language unconsciously (Krashen in Fromkin and Rodman, 1988:391).

I should remind the readers that some discrepancies might arise since the study is done based on English references, while the object is Indonesian language. A simple example is Indonesian yes/no questions are operated by adjunction elementary while English yes/no questions are operated by permutation elementary. However, since language acquisition is universal, some theories proposed should be applicable to all children and languages in the world.

I.2. Statement of the Problems

Children's language is different from adutls' one. It is due to the fact that children develop their linguistic knowledge by stages. They use their innate knowledge to grasp the elementary transformations used in their language. To know the elementary transformations they used in accordance with their ages, some problems are discussed in this study and they are defined as follows:

I.2.1.   How are the elementary transformations of Indonesian used by children of

four - six years old?

I.2.2.   What are the differences of the elementary transformations of Indonesian

made by children of four - six years old?

I.3. Objective of the study

Through this study, the writer intends to give explanation and description

about the elementary transformations of Indonesian used by the children of four - six

years old. Furthermore, the writer also wants to identify the differences of the

elementary transformations of Indonesian children produce.

I.4. Significance of the Study

This study is expected to give a meaningful contribution to the linguistic

studies, especially Syntax, since it concerns Transformational Generative Grammar.

Although this study is limited to elementary transformations of Indonesian used by

children of different ages, hopefully it can give some information that might

challenge further researches in linguistics.

The study of how children learn to speak has proved to be one of the most

fascinating and complicated branches of language study in recent years. It shows how

people acquire their native language. For people who are interested in children's

language acquisition, this study is expected to enrich the knowledge about

elementary transformations of children in their age.

Preschoolers and schoolchildren are in the early linguistic development that

need much attention to encourage their linguistic ability. Through this study, the

writer also hopes it can give some contributions for teachers and parents in

supporting children's language acquisition and make it a consideration for their language development.

I.5. Scope and Limitation

Since this study concerns the study of elementary transformations, as a part of Transformational Generative Grammar, it is closely related to pure linguistic study, especially syntax. This study just analyzes the elementary transformations of Indonesian and their differences made by children of four - six years old who use Indonesian language as their first language.

The writer limits to the elementary transformations based on transformational theories of Jacobs and Rosenbaum and Katz and Postal that state four types of elementary transformations: deletion, substitution, adjunction, and permutation.

I.6. Theoretical Framework

In this study, some theories which are related to this study are adopted to some extent. The theories deal with the elementary transformations and the deep and surface structures of sentences.

I.6.1. The Elementary Transformations

Some theories of transformation have been proposed to describe the term transformation. According to Chomsky (in Harsh, 1975:7), the term "transformation" refers to a rule that rearranges various elements in a sentence when that sentence is changed from its simple, active, affirmative, declarative (SAAD) form to a more complicated sentence - such as, say one asking question, giving command, or containing one or more included clauses. Shortly, non SAAD sentences, such as

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negative, interrogative, imperative, passive, compound and complex sentences are derived from SAAD sentences via a set of transformational rules. More specifically, the elementary transformations are always involved in such changes (Chomsky in Taylor, 1990:123).

Another definition is given by Roderick A. Jacobs and Peter S. Rosenbaum in their book titled *English Transformational Grammar*. Transformation is a process which converts deep structure into surface structure (Jacobs and Rosenbaum, 1968:23).

All languages contain transformations which transform deep structures into surface structures. However, the specific transformations of one language are always different from the specific transformations of other languages. But, what is most important is the fact that transformations of all languages seem to involve basically the same kinds of operations on constituent structures. The operations, called elementary transformations, may be used differently in different languages, but the operations remain the same (Jacobs dan Rosenbaum, 1968:26).

Each transformation consists of *a structural condition* and *a structural change* (Wall, 1972,292). The former is a finite sequence of terms indicating (1) certain formal properties a tree must have in order for the rule to be applied to it, and (2) if it has these properties, how the tree is to be broken up into the parts that enter into the structural change. The structural change consists of a finite sequence of so-called *elementary transformations.*

About elementary transformational processes, Jacobs and Rosenbaum (1968:26) point out that there seems to be at least three different kinds of elementary transformations which can be used in the formulation of a particular transformation.

Robert Wall (1972:292) consents to them about these types of elementary transformations, which are: (1) deletion, (2) substitution, and (3) adjunction (either to the left or the right).

The elementary transformational process of deletion (shortly, deletion elementary) is one in which there is something removed from the structure. The deletion elementry can operate only if at least one of the following conditions is met:

1. There is a duplicate of the deleted subtree at a specific location elsewhere in the tree.

2. The deleted term is one of a finite set of constant strings and is mentioned specifically in the structural condition of the transformation.

An example of transformation in which the deletion elementary meets the former condition is Conjunction Reduction, which transforms a structure corresponding to *'Ani menanam bunga'* and *'Wati menanam bunga'* into one corresponding to *'Ani dan Wati menanam bunga'* by deletion of one of the identical verb phrases. The second condition is exemplified by a transformation that putatively derives imperatives of the form *'Buka pintu itu!'* from an underlying structure corresponding to *'Kamu buka pintu itu'* by deleting the constant term *'kamu'.*

The elementary transformational process of substitution (shortly, substitution elementary) involves replacing an element of the deep structure with another element. The easily example is found in an Indonesian reflexive sentence, in which the sentence 'Anwar membunuh diri' is derived from 'Anwar membunuh Anwar'. The constituent 'diri' substitutes for the constituent 'Anwar'.

The elementary transformational process of adjunction (shortly, adjunction elementary) is one by which we adjunct something in the tree that was not in the

deep structure. In an Indonesian negative sentence, we can find this adjunction elementary. From the sentence 'Orang itu tidak mempunyai mobil', we can find that this sentence is derived from 'Orang itu mempunyai mobil'. By the addition of constituent 'tidak' to the constituents 'orang itu' and 'mempunyai mobil', the negative sentence is formed.

Jerold J. Katz and Paul M. Postal (in Parera, 1988:82) add permutation elementary. By permutation, we move one or more than one constituent in other position in a sentence. The constituents which are moved usually function as adverbial elements that occupy relatively free position. An example is the sentence 'Kemarin Andi belajar matematika' which corresponds to 'Andi belajar matematika kemarin'. The second sentence is transformed into the first sentence by moving constituent 'kemarin' in front of the constituent 'Andi'.

I.6.2. The Deep and Surface Structures of Sentences

In *English Transformational Grammar* Jacobs and Rosenbaum state that the most important fact about the sentences of human language is that all sentences have both a deep structure and a surface structure. A deep structure conveys meaning of a sentence; a surface structure gives form of a sentence. Thus, a deep structure is an abstract object; it is a structure one assumes on the basis of the meaning of a sentence and its syntax. A surface structure is closer to physical reality in that it concretely specifies the sentence structure necessary for spoken or written communication (Jacobs and Rosenbaum, 1968:21).

Furthermore, Huddeston (1984:419) points out that the deep structure serves as *input* to the changes while surface structure serves as the *output* of the changes.

Clearly, surface structures are generated from deep structures by the application of

transformations. Transformations relate deep structures to surface structures or more

specifically, they transform one constituent structure into another. In detail

Categorial Component (or Base Component) of grammar directly generates deep

structures, and these then serve as input to a set of transformational rules which

convert them into the corresponding surface structures. In schematic terms, the

revised model of the syntactic component of a grammar might be represented as

follow:

```
        ┌──────────────┐
        │     BASE     │
        └──────┬───────┘
               ▼
     ┌───────────────────┐
     │   Deep structure   │
     └─────────┬──────────┘
               ▼
  ┌─────────────────────────┐
  │     Transformations      │
  └────────────┬────────────┘
               ▼
  ┌─────────────────────────┐
  │    Surface structure     │
  └─────────────────────────┘
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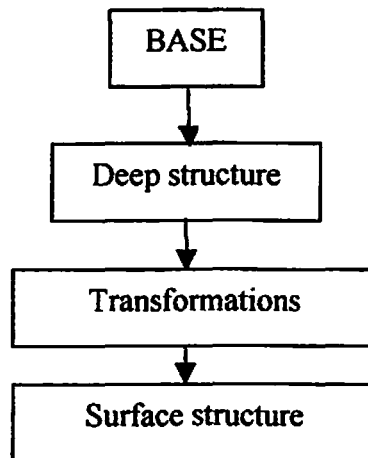
To use the appropriate technical terminology, it might be said that the

categorial Component of the Base generates abstract prelexical structures which are

lexicalized by the insertion of items from the Lexicon: these lexicalized structures

are known as deep structures. By the subsequent application of transformations, these

deep structures are then transformed into the corresponding structures (Huddeston

1984, 419). The structure of a sentence can be represented visually by the use of

labelled tree diagram (P-markers=Phrase-markers). Generally speaking, this method

is easier to read because the information it contains is less condensed. From the

sentence below, its sentence structure can be visually represented.

(1) Orang itu mempunyai mobil.

```
           S
      NP        VP
   N   det    V    NP
   |    |     |     N
 Orang itu mempunayi mobil
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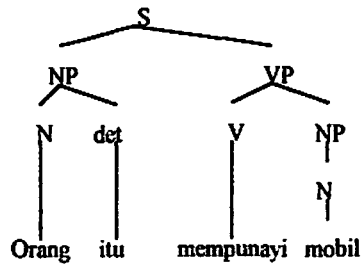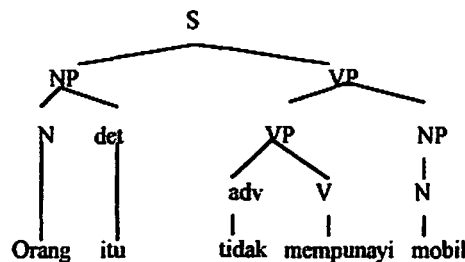
A diagram such as (1) provides a visual representation of the categorial constituent structure of sentence (1). Equivalently, it might be said that since diagram (1) shows how sentence (1) is structured out of its constituent phrase, and how each phrase is structured out of its component words, diagram (1) provides a visual representation of phrase structure of sentence (1).

Sentence (1) can be changed into a negative sentence as follows:

(2) Orang itu tidak mempunyai mobil.

These two sentences are identical except that the second is the negation of the first. Since these sentences are not synonymous, they have different deep structures. The addition of NEG represents the information that although the remainder of the structure is identical to that of the first sentence, this sentence has a negative interpretation.

The negation transformation converts the NEG constituent into 'not' and introduces this word to the right of 'should', generating the surface structure below::

```
              S
      NP              VP
   N   det        VP        NP
   |    |       adv   V      N
   |    |        |    |      |
 Orang itu    tidak mempunayi mobil
```

Notice that this deep structure contains a hypothetical constituent NEG, which does two things. First, it specifies that the sentence is negative semantically. Second, it provides a structure upon which the negation transformation is defined and can apply. By requiring that the negation transformation applies only if the NEG constituent is present, the grammar prevents the application of the transformation to deep structure which is not semantically interpreted as negation. The negation transformation is the process which adds the certain word(s) to the deep structure given above, so as to generate the surface structure diagrammed below:
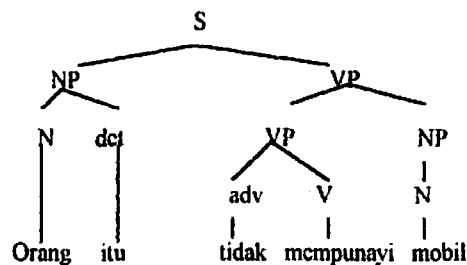
As stated in the previous subchapter, transformations of all languages always seem to use elementary transformations in the formulation. Related to elementary transformations, the two sentences above show a process of adjunction elementary. It means that sentence (2) (a negative sentence) is derived from sentence (1) (a SAAD sentence) via adjunction elementary. The constituent NEG in the deep structure of sentence (2) implies that adjunction elementary is ready to be operated on the deep structure of sentence (2) by adding constituent 'tidak' in front of verb 'mempunyai'. As a result, a negative sentence is formed.

I.7. Method of the Study

In doing this study, the writer uses the qualitative approach and the method

used is descriptive one because the writer wants to describe the elementary transformations of Indonesian sentences used by children of four - six years old.

I.7.1. Location of the Study

The investigation of this study took place in Surabaya. The location of this study does not have direct influence to the result of the study because language acquisition is universal and there are facts that show that every normal child will learn the language to which he/she is exposed.

I.7.2. Respondents of the Study

The respondents of this study are children of four, five, and six years old. In an age range of about 3,5 to 4,5 years all the basic syntactic structures used by adults are used by some children. McCarthy (in   Menyuk, 1969:18) states that obviously a great deal of language development has occured by this age period and after this age period until age 7 and probably beyond this age. The development takes place in several forms: use of elaborated forms of basic structures and use of differing types of transformational operations, and observation of selectional restrictions.

Three children were chosen as the respondents of this study. The use of a small number of respondents in this study is meant to record the details of children's elementary transformations in their language acquisition. Such details might be lost in the research that employs a large number of respondents (Brown in Fletcher 1985:95).

The respondents should be:

- Aged: 4 – 6 years old

- Using Indonesian as their first language

- Being healthy physically and psychologically, not suffering from any

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illnesses that hamper their mental development.

- Being able to speak Indonesian relatively well.

The respondents are then referred to as child A (aged:4), child B (aged:5), and child C (aged:6).

I.7.2. Definition of Key Terms

Transformational Generative Grammar : the grammar consisting of a set of symbols and a set of rules in which the rules combine the symbols in various ways.

Sentence structure. In standard transformational generative grammar, all sentences have both a deep structure and a surface structure.

Deep structure : a structure generated only by phrase structure and lexical rules. It provides an explicit account of the meaning of the sentence or constituent.

Surface structure : a deep structure that has been transformed into a grammatical sentence; the product of change. It provides the explicit form of a sentence or constituent.

Transformational rules: In the standard transformational grammar, non-SAAD sentences are derived from a SAAD (simple-affirmative-active-declarative) sentence via a set of transformations. They are the rules that operate on the transformational processes.

Labelled tree diagram : The structure of a sentence diagrammed as a hierarchial tree, with labelled nodes for constituents and branching lines for structural groupings of constituents.

Constituent structure : a word or a sequence of words, phrases, clauses, sentences - that has a structure and a label and functions as a linguistic unit; the parts of a

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sentence that constitute groups of words or group of phrases.

Phrase structure rules. In the standard transformational grammar, a set of rules for rewriting or expanding a symbol into two or more symbols, thus (together with a lexicon).

Sentences and utterances. Although those two terms refer to different language forms, in this study both of them are pertained to the strecth of spoken language uttered by a speaker.

List of abbreviations:

S : Sentence.

NP : Noun Phrase.

N : Noun.

VP : Verb Phrase.

V : Verb.

Adv P : Adverb Phrase.

Adv : Adverb.

AP : Adjective Phrase.

Adj : Adjective.

Aux : Auxiliary.

Det : Determiner.

Ind. Pron : Indonesian pronoun.

Conj : Conjunction.

Rel. pron = Relative Pronoun.

I.6.4. Technique of Data Collection

In collecting the data, the writer chose Surabaya as the location of the study. The writer uses a cross-sectional approach in which a researcher observes simultaneously some children in different categories such as age (Taylor, 1990:228). Three children were selected to be the respondents; child A represented the child of four years old, child B represented the child of five years old, and child C represented the child of six years old. In details, the writer interviewed the children's parents to know the history of children's language development. The writer also tried to have any conversation in Indonesian with the children. If they can communicate in Indonesian and use Indonesian as their first language, the writer would take them as the respondents of this study.

After finding the respondents, the writer made observation. The observation was done in three stimulus situations that were adopted from Menyuk (1969:19) by using tape recorder. The situations are responses to a projective test, conversation with adults (the writer and their family), and conversation with peers.

In the first situation, the writer recorded whatever sentences the children produced and uttered as responses to the situation around them. In the second situation, the writer or the member(s) of their family made conversation with them generated by some questions about their family, activities, and hobbies. The third test was done by recording the conversation of children when they were playing.

From the above explanation, an effort was made to sample language in typical situations. Shortly, the technique of data collection can be stated as follows:

- Observing the location and the respondents of the study.

- Choosing the respondents.

- Interviewing the parents of the respondents.

- Interviewing the respondents.

- Making recording.

I.6.5. Technique of Data Analysis

After collecting and selecting data, the writer began to analyze the data. The data were analyzed in terms of the theories proposed in the theoretical framework. The analysis was done per recording since each recording resulted in different findings.

First, the writer transcribed the data of the best recording using orthographic transcription. This kind of transcription is more practical than a phonetic transcription. Nevertheless, the use of this sort of transcription made many of children's utterances idealized. The data that were transcribed are the sentences produced by children during the recording taking place. Both grammatical and nongrammatical sentences were picked out to show their language acquisition of elementary transformations to which they were exposed. After transcribing the data from the recording, the writer classified them according to their ages.

In the further step, the writer described the orthographic transcription data by using labelled tree diagram. Hence, the writer analyzed the sentences made by children in different ages.

In the last step, the writer explained the differences of elementary transforamtions made by the children of four, five, and six years old. In this step of analysis, the differences were seen from types of sentences involving the use of

elementary transformations and combinations of elementary transformations used by those children in their sentences.

Shortly, the technique of data analysis can be stated as follows:

– Transcribing the data in orthographic transcription.

– Classifying the data in accordance with their age.

– Describing the data by labelled tree diagrams.

– Explaining the differences of elementary transformations of Indonesian sentences made by the children of four, five, and six years old.
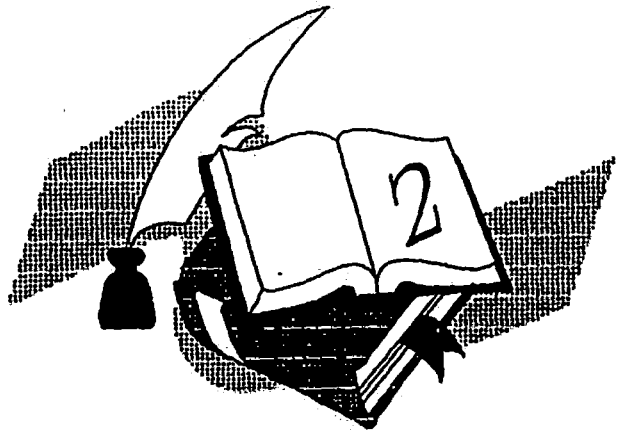
CHAPTER II

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS OF THE STUDY