CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, scope and limitation of the study, significance of the study, and definition of key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

Allah has created human being in this world in best and different from other creatures. Although human being is created as the best creature of other creatures, God still gives laxity to them in different way. It proves that God is the perfect one. No one can be equal his perfection like what God says in the Holy Qur'an (Ar-Ra'd, 8): Allah knows every female (womb) doth bear, by how much the wombs fall short (of their time or number) or do exceed. Every single thing is with him, in (due) proportion. Based on the verse above as explained in Tafsir Ibnu Katsir, Allah as the lord of the world has the greatest power to set human life. He knows every human excess and laxity in their life when they are still in his mother's womb. He has determined human's fates whether they are created in man or woman, how long standing their life are, and how their condition (good or bad) would be. Here, the writer points that God is the only one who knows and sets human fate in their life.

Therefore, not all people face their lucky fate in life, because Allah gives us weakness in every person. For example is what happens to those who have mental disorder. They get difficulty on social interaction of human. The deficit refers to the weakness which is categorized as language disorder. Language disorder refers to language disfluency which causes the damage of understanding and expression of language. As the result, they have disorder on language production and comprehension.

Language disorder are disorders which involve the processing linguistic information. Problem that may be experienced can involve phonology, syntax, semantics, or pragmatics (Carroll (1985), cited in Rofi, 2011: 13). People with language disorder may have problems in their daily conversation. Field (2004: 93) argues the problems of language disorder may be receptive (impaired language comprehension), expressive (language production), or combination of both. This case is usually experienced by the children who has a mental disorder, such as autism.

Autism in children may have impairments in both receptive and expressive. Because of these impairments, autistic children get failure to make social communication in their daily life. They also tend to have lack of eye contact and rarely play game with other people, yet they get difficulty to build social relationship (Dawson, 1989: 9). That is why they are usually ignored and neglected, and often misunderstood by the community. People sometimes define the term "autism" improperly because they have lack information about it. Some

people sometimes consider that autistic children are similar to idiot children who are different from normal children.

Actually, the word autism is already common in our ears. American psychiatrist Leo Kanner firstly introduces about autism that is known as autism spectrum disorder (ASD). He found eleven children (8 boys and 3 girls) who had the same characteristics of impairment, for instance they cannot communicate with others and do not care with their environment, so that they are like live in their own world. Based on his research, Kanner gives the common characteristics of autism, those are: the lateness of speech acquisition and the inability to use communicative speech, echolalia/ repeating the words, pronoun reversal, and impaired relationship with other people, repetitive and stereotyped play activities, and normal physical appearance (Kanner, 1943: 249-250).

The same core of deficits on Autistic children is also described by American Psychiatric Association (1994, cited in Filipek, 1999: 443). They explain autism as a neurodevelopment disorder which is characterized by the diagnosed autism criteria by a variety of symptoms that can occur in different combinations and range from mild to severe. The symptoms are from each of these categories: the first is impairment in social interaction, the second is impairment in communication, and the last is repetitive interests and behaviors such as failure to use facial expression, gestures and lack of eye contact and lack of ability to initiate a conversation with others. They also may not respond when someone calls their name or play with other children before age of three. Normal children at the age of 2 -3 begins to learn speaking, but autistic children do not

indicate language development as early as others, and some never indicate the language development. So, it needs to detect earlier when they are at this stage, because children will pass rapid development.

Lenneberg (1967) (cited in Kandel, 842) describes the stage of development in the acquisition of language. Children at the age of 3, they are able to use full sentences and make few errors and close to adult speech at the age of 4. Many investigators have claimed that the child has mastered the essential of language by the age of 4 or 5 years (e.g., McNeill, 1970; Slobin, 1971, cited in Foss, 1978: 241). Normally, children are able to speak fluently around five years. They will be able to say something, understand words, distinguish their meaning and discover the rules for recombining sounds into words then make it into a sentence and do a turn taking with the partner in conversation. But, children with autism may not follow the typical patterns of language phase. Although the children are at the age of 6, but their language stage might look like at the age of 3. Therefore, it becomes the problem when some children take longer time to pass those stages, especially when they have reached six years, in which they should have been able to talk, combine words into a sentence, understand and use the language in their daily communication.

Although the language of children who suffer autism is delayed, but phonologically, their articulation is clear enough in spite of making errors in mentioning something. Although some children with autism speak relatively fluently which is often accompanied by word meaning errors, but they are unable to use in conversation. The intonation also tends to flat and wrong in making stress in speech. The syntactic ability is also delayed because they often echolalia (Indah and Abdurrahman, 2008: 127). Besides, young autistic children, even if verbal, have comprehension deficits (APA (1994), cited in Filipek, 1999: 444). Autistic children have some problems in acquiring a good speech process and comprehending the speech for their social interaction. In fact, they need to treat earlier.

The writer concerned with the phenomena above and wants to apply and improve the knowledge of linguistic for analyzing the language disorder especially to explore how language comprehension and production are impaired and what kinds of treatments are given to help them, because it is important to overcome their disabilities as early detection of the symptom of autism. Thus, it becomes one of ways to increase the knowledge of parents to help their autistic children. Besides, it may build parents love and patience how to face their disable children in daily life. Autism phenomenon which is already described above is not only happened in the real fact but also reflected in the movie. Here, the writer uses *After Thomas* Movie as the subject of the research to represent the autistic children phenomenon.

The writer chooses *After Thomas* movie as the subject of study because of some reasons; the first, this movie represents autistic phenomenon which story is taken from true story. It tells about the boy who suffers autism, Kyle, speaks like a parrot, because he sometimes repeats what his family says and uses it in many contexts. He seldom speaks and gets the difficulty to understand what people say, so that he gets difficulty to communicate. Although he sometimes speaks some

utterances, he just says in short sentence. He also could not convey his speech Cleary. Hence, his parents struggle to make their child able to communicate and interact with others. One day, they finally find some treatments to help their child in order to be able to communicate with other. They use a dog which they call Thomas, because the name of Thomas is Kyle's favorite movie actor. By the presence of the dog, his family treats him by imitation and always talking to him. Kyle finally gets improvement in his daily interaction. The second, this movie also shows language disorder which is used by Kyle as the autistic character. And the third, *After Thomas* movie (2006) is one of UK movies where there are many children suffer autism portrayed there. Besides, this movie won one award in Shanghai International TV Festival 2007 and one nominated as Best Directing for a Television Film.

Furthermore, the writer is interested in analyzing language disorder in her study entitled Language Disorder and Its Treatments on Autistic Children Portrayed in Lindsey Hill's After Thomas Movie. In this study, the writer analyzes language disorder of autistic boy portrayed in After Thomas movie.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Based on the background of study above, this study is conducted to find out the answer of some problem in relation with discussion above, as follows:

- 1. What are language disorders experienced by an autistic child in *After Thomas* movie?
- 2. What are the treatments given to an autistic child in *After Thomas* movie?

3. What is the result of an autistic child's language after given the best treatment in *After Thomas* movie?

1.3 Objective of Study

Based on the statement of the problems above, it brings some purpose of study which can be formulated as below:

- **1.** To describe how language disorders experienced by an autistic child in *After Thomas* movie.
- **2.** To describe some treatments given to an autistic child in *After Thomas* movie.
- 3. To describe the result of an autistic child's language after given the best treatment in *After Thomas* movie.

1.4 Significance of Study

Through this study, the writer hopes this study is expected to give both theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, the result of this study can give contribution to enrich knowledge and understanding to other writers in psycholinguistics fields, especially language disorder and some treatments to overcome the disabilities.

Particularly, the writer wants to know more about language disorder especially in autism and its treatment. Besides, it also can give beneficial information and additional reference to other writers who want to make further studies on language disorder, especially that is related to and its treatment on autism. Furthermore, the writer's finding can also give more information to

Disable School how to help the sufferer develop their daily communication. Not only that, it can also help the parents whose children suffers autism to care them, because one of successful factors on disable children's language ability is dependent on the environment help especially parental role to motivate and attention to children.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

In order to make this study manageable, it is necessary to scope and limit the discussion. In this research, the scope of this research is focused on the psycholinguistics analysis, especially language disorder and its treatment by autistic children. This study is centered on the types of language disorder and some treatment given to him which is displayed by one of the main character in After Thomas movie.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

The writer attempts to clearly several terms which is used as the topic in this research, such as:

Language disorder is a language disability to understand what people says by not responding to them, or to produce some utterances and use it to communicate or both the understanding and spoken especially who suffer autism.

Treatment is some ways given to sufferer to make them able to produce and comprehend some speech so that they still can communicate with others.

Autism is a mental illness where a person is not able to interact with society and get difficulty to produce and comprehend some utterances.

Autistic Children is children who are suffered autism that is difficult to interact and communicate with other people with same interests.

After Thomas Movie is a movie by Lindsey Hill which tells about an autistic children aged six-year-old namely Kyle who has difficulty in social interaction and speech production and his parents give him some treatment to help him.

