



LANGUAGE ACQUISITION OF CHILDREN UNDER 3 YEARS OLD

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Abstract

This study focuses on analyzing language acquisition on children under 3 years old involved by means of descriptive qualitative method. The subject of this research is the children at the age 2 years old named Yuni who lived in Padangsidempuan. For this research, the writer uses the video recorder to record the conversation of child and parents. In this research, to collect the data the writer applies observation method and video recording of conversation between child and parent. In analyzing the data, the writer conducts some procedures. The data are collected from video recording of the conversation between child and parent. The writer transcribes the recording data and analyzes it based on phonetic of phonem acquisition. Then includes them in approaching language acquisition. The results of the research Phonological errors, Incorrect utterances, Imitation, Correction, Laziness.

Keywords: *Language Acquisition, Children, Language Development*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini berfokus pada analisis pemerolehan bahasa pada anak usia di bawah 3 tahun dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif. Subjek penelitian ini adalah anak usia 2 tahun bernama Yuni yang tinggal di Padangsidempuan. Untuk penelitian ini, penulis menggunakan perekam video untuk merekam percakapan anak dan orang tua. Dalam penelitian ini, untuk mengumpulkan data penulis menggunakan metode observasi dan rekaman video percakapan antara anak dan orang tua. Dalam menganalisis data, penulis melakukan beberapa prosedur. Data dikumpulkan dari rekaman video percakapan antara anak dan orang tua. Penulis mentranskripsikan data rekaman dan menganalisisnya berdasarkan fonetik perolehan fonem. Kemudian sertakan mereka dalam pendekatan pemerolehan bahasa. Hasil penelitian Kesalahan Fonologis, Salah Ucapan, Imitasi, Koreksi, Kemalasan.

Kata Kunci: Pemerolehan Bahasa, Anak, Perkembangan Bahasa

INTRODUCTION

Parents do not teach the native language to their children formally. Although they may try to reinforce their child's verbal behavior with smiles or other ways or through the gap between their mature linguistic competence and the child's beginning by means of "baby talk". But there is no particular reason to believe that such ability appears on the child's final achievement in becoming a native speaker of his parents' language; children can pick up a language like playing a game with other children to extend their language abilities. The specific environmental factors that make it possible for language acquisition to occur, but the primary element would appear to be merely sufficient exposure to language use in a social context. Children seem to learn language they way they learn to walk. They learn thousands of words, complex phonological and grammatical structures, semantic and pragmatic relations. As Fromkin (1983:326) said that we do not enter the world before we are able to stand and walk, but all normal children begin to do so at





around the same age. No one teaches them to walk. Obviously “learning to walk” or learning language is different than “learning to read” or “learning to ride a bicycle.”

Language acquisition is the process whereby children achieve a fluent control of their native language (Varshney, 2003:307). Children learn a language, not because they are subjected to a similar conditioning process, but because they possess an inborn capacity which permits them to acquire a language as a normal maturational process. This capacity is universal. The child has an innate language acquiring device. He learns a language by exposure to it in society and by unconsciously forming certain hypothesis about language, which he goes on modifying till he comes to the adult model to which he is for the most part exposed. So the child goes on constructing an innate grammar, operating over generalized rules. The capacity for acquiring language is remarkable a number of reasons (Langacker, 1973:12-13). It is first because of its uniformity throughout the human race. There simply are no cases of normal human children who, given the chance, fail to acquire a native language. The ability of children at such young age to form complex rules, to construct the grammars of spoken and sign languages, and to do in such a relatively short time is indeed phenomenal. The fact that the stages through which a child learns a language of different nations reveals interesting aspects of the acquisition process (Fromkin, 1983:341). From this, we know that it is impossible that the child passing suddenly from one stage to another. In addition to that, as universal there are some stages in acquiring the native language. They are the cooing stage, the babbling stage, the holophrastic stage, the two word stage, and the telegraph stage. As Fromkin states (1983:326) that children do not wake up one morning with a fully formed grammar in their heads or with all the “rules” of social and communicative intercourse. The language is acquired by the stages, and, it is suggested, every successive stage more closely near to the grammar of the adult language. Observations of children in different language areas of the world reveal that the stages are very similar, possibly universal. Some of the stages may overlap for a short period, though the transition between stages has been observed to quite sudden. In acquiring the language, there must be some problems to develop children language in every stage has mentioned above. So the writer is interested to write this research to find lexical word of the children in 2 years old.

Review Of Literature

Language Acquisition

Language Acquisition is meant process whereby children achieve a fluent control of their native language (Varshney, 2003:307). The ability to get and understand the language is inherited genetically but the particular language that children speak is culturally and environmentally transmitted to them. Children all over the world acquire their first language without tutoring. Whereas a child exposed to speak to an English speaking community begins to speak English fluently, the other one exposed to a community of Indonesian speakers, begins to use Indonesia fluently. Language acquisition thus appears to be different in kind from the acquisition of other skill such as swimming, dancing, or gymnastics. Native language acquisition is much less likely to be affected by mental retardation than the acquisition of other intellectual skill activities. Every normal human child learns one or more language unless he is brought up in linguistic isolation, and learns the essentials of his language by a fairly little age, say by six.

According to Chomsky (2009:101-102) language acquisition is a matter of growth and maturation of relatively fixed capacities, under appropriate external conditions. The form of Acquisition and use of language the language that is acquired is largely determined by internal factors; it is because of the fundamental correspondence of all human



languages, because of the fact that “human beings are the same, wherever they may be”, that a child can learn any language. The functioning of the language capacity is, furthermore, optimal at a certain “critical period” of intellectual development. In addition to that, the term „language acquisition“ is normally used without qualification for the process which results in the knowledge of one’s native language (or native languages). It is conceivable that the acquisition of a foreign language whether it is learned systematically at school or not, proceeds in a quite different way. Indeed, as we have seen, the acquisition of one’s native language after the alleged „critical age“ for language acquisition may differ, for neurophysiological reasons, from the normal child’s acquisition of his native language. (Lyons, 1981:252). **As Bolinger (2002:3) said that, acquiring a language calls for three things:**

1. Predispositions, as well as physical capacities, developed through countless centuries of natural selection; People have capacities for communicating in a human way uniquely and capacities for acting such as breathing, grasping and crying.
2. A preexisting language system, any one of the many produced by the cultures of the world; Language persists through time and from speaker to speaker. We are not born with an instinct to learn language such as English, Indonesian or Chinese but we learn a language as members of the society, or we want to understand that society, or to be understood by that speech community. It means that if a language is not used in any society, it dies out.
3. A competence that comes from applying the predispositions and capacities to the system through the relatively long period during which the child learns both to manipulate the physical elements of the system, such as sounds and words and grammatical rules, and to permeate them with meaning: A child must learn the rules before use the language creatively.

Language acquisition at age 1-3 years old occurs naturally. It is meant that a child is insensibly acquiring the language but the fact he/she can produce the language for communication. The process of acquiring the language at the age before 5 years old is called as Golden age. This period show the progress of language development from one stage to another.



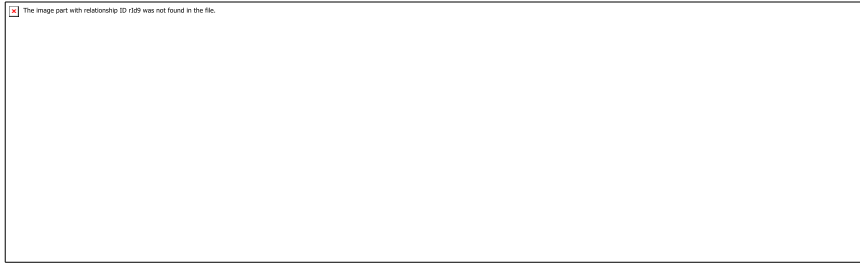
We know that walking is a process of acquisition. All children are able to walk without any instruction and tutoring or no one teaches them to walk.) Reading is a learning process because he/she is taught to read so that he/she is able to read. As we know many people all over the world are not able to read because they are not taught to do so.

Nature versus Nurture

The controversial between nature and nurture is explored by the ancient theories of language acquisition, that is, whether language is innate and God-given or learned by environment. Gleason (1998:376) states perhaps this is the major question that divides psycholinguistics. To what extent is language hardwired into human brain (nature), and to what extent is it learned through interaction with the environment (nurture)? Do parents teach children language, or does language simply unfold according to a genetic program?



Varshney (2003:309-310) summarizes the difference between the empiricists' approach and rationalists in the following manner:



From the explanation of the table above, Varshney (2003:310) takes two points they are: (1) Language is a maturationally controlled behavior, and (2) child language is rule-governed, at every stage. Many types of behavior develop „naturally“ at a certain age, provided that the surrounding environment is adequate and teaching is available at the crucial time. Such behavior is maturationally controlled. Arguments as to whether it is inborn or learnt, are useless. Both nature and nurture, analogy and application, practice and exposure are important. Innate potentialities lay down the framework. Within this framework, there is wide variation depending on the environment. From the age of around eighteen months, human infants are in a state of „language readiness“. The urge for language in them at this time is very strong, and only very extraordinary circumstances can suppress it. A child brought up in complete linguistic isolation, will not acquire language. But all normal children and some abnormal ones begin to speak if they hear language going around them at this time.

According to Chomsky in Steinberg (2003:94), humans are born with minds that contain innate knowledge concerning a number of different areas. One such area or faculty of the mind concerns language. Chomsky has called that innate language knowledge LAD, language acquisition device. It is Chomsky's belief that such faculties of the mind are relatively independent of one another. For example, he believes that innate knowledge alone is sufficient for the acquisition of language and that mathematical or logical knowledge is not needed. Actually, this is one basis for Chomsky's oft-repeated assertion that language acquisition is independent of intelligence and logic. It is important to note that knowledge which is innate is not functional or operational and it may not become so unless certain experiences stemming from the world interact with it. Thus, experience is an essential element in the acquisition of knowledge. Its role, however, is not so much to form or shape knowledge as it is to activate the knowledge that is already innate but latent in the human being. The function of LAD (Language Acquisition Device) is to provide a person with a particular grammar (sets of rules and lexical items), given language data (sentences, in particular) if that language (Steinberg, 2003:95) For example, gave English sentences as input; LAD constructs a grammar of English in the child's mind. In addition to that, Chomsky in Steinberg (2003:95) incorporates three classes of innate ideas into LAD, they are: substantive ideas, formal ideas, and constructive ideas. The substantive ideas are those ideas which appear in relations or are manipulated by operations, i.e. phonetic, syntactic, and semantic features. The formal ideas are those which express relations or manipulations, i.e. the Base and Transformation rule functions. The constructive, are those ideas which enable the mind to construct a particular grammar using the substantive and formal innate ideas, given particular language data as input.

Cognitive Theory



Cognitive theorists believe that language is subordinate part of cognitive development, dependent on the attainment of various concepts (Gleason 1998:383). According to this view, children learn about the world first, and then map language onto that prior experience. Additionally, cognitive theorists believe that language is just one aspect of human cognition. According to Piaget and his followers in Gleason (1998:384), infants must learn about world around them, which they do through active experimentation and construction. For example, the infant crawls around the floor, observes object from all angles, and slowly develops a sensorimotor (literally, “through the senses and more activity) understanding of the space in which she lives.

Children Language Development

Semantic is the study of the linguistic meaning of words, phrases, and sentences (Fromkin, 1983:164). Children’s early utterances, consisting primarily of single words, were once considered to carry the meaning of whole sentences; they were labeled holophrastic. It was thought that children intended the more elaborate meanings of older individuals but non-semantic factors, such as their insufficient memory spans Gleason and Smith, in Gleason, (1985:152) states that this position was difficult to support because it required attributing intention and semantic knowledge to young children on the basis a little evidence. It is now believed that young children come only gradually to understand and subsequently encode in their words of adult meanings. Gleason (1985:90) states that the processes of concepts learning and lexicalization, or attachment of words and meaning, may occur at varying rates and overlapping in time. At times children’s concepts right match those of adult, but the children might use imperfect and only partially appropriate words because they lack better words to express themselves. To serve their communication desires, children may make a choice to use words in an analogous fashion or as semantic standing for the words they do not know. And then, Nelson at all in Gleason (1985:90) have suggested that young children are actively engaged in the “classification and of features of objects and events” and use their single words analogically to comment upon similarities they have noticed additional evidence that children are using analogy comes from the fact that they are seldom observed to use words in this fashion often they acquire syntax and can explain what they mean. As Jakobson in Fromkin (1983:163) said that language without meaning is meaningless.

METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

The methodology of this research is descriptive qualitative approach. It is descriptive because it attempts to find out the children problems in first language acquisition by Yuni at age 2 years old. The subject of this research is the children at the age 2 years old named Yuni who lived in Padangsidempuan. For this research, the writer uses the video recorder to record the conversation of child and parents. In this research, to collect the data the writer applies observation method and video recording of conversation between child and parent. In analyzing the data, the writer conducts some procedures. The data are collected from video recording of the conversation between child and parent. The writer transcribes the recording data and analyzes it based on phonetic of phonem acquisition. Then includes them in approaching language acquisition.



Data analyzing

Here is the data transcription of lexical words of the Yuni's pronunciation.

No.	Lexical	Pronunciation	Phonem change
1.	Makan	Matan	k → t
2.	Minum	Inum	omission first letter
3.	Yuni	Uni	omission first letter
4.	Nyamuk	Amuk	omission first letter
5.	Rumah	Umah	omission first letter
6.	Semut	Cemut	s → c
7.	Sepatu	Cepatu	s → c
8.	Korek	Kolek	r → l
9.	Abisin	Abicin	s → c
10.	Gak mau	Nda mau	g → nd
11.	Mekkah	Meka	omission middle letter
12.	Pie toh	Piye ta	o → a
13.	Assalamu'alaikum	Assamuekum	omission some letters
14.	Tulang	Tuang	omission middle letter
15.	Duit	Uit	omission first letter

IV. Results And Discussion

Chomsky (2009:101-102) language acquisition is a matter of growth and maturation of relatively fixed capacities, under appropriate external conditions. The form of Acquisition and use of language the language that is acquired is largely determined by internal factors; it is because of the fundamental correspondence of all human languages, because of the fact that "human beings are the same, wherever they may be", that a child can learn any language. The functioning of the language capacity is, furthermore, optimal at a certain "critical period" of intellectual development. In addition to that, the term „language acquisition“ is normally used without qualification for the process which results in the knowledge of one's native language (or native languages).

Based on the analysis of the research, the research findings are as follow:

1. **Phonological errors:** Removing one or two letters of the word, changing the letters of the word into the other letters, for example : makan matan, semut cemut, korek → kolek, abisin → abicin.
2. **Incorrect utterances:** Parents always think that the child will more understand if they say the word such the way the child pronounces it. They do not pronounce something genuinely.
3. **Imitation:** Child is sensitive to imitate the words in his environment such as Television or from the people around her/him, for example: piye toh (pie ta), assalamu'alaikum (assamuekum).
4. **Correction:** The child will get frustration if his/her parents do not understand what he/she is talking about.
5. **Laziness:** Giving response or information by single word to simplify her/his answer.



CONCLUSION

There are some problems in first language acquisition namely: phonological errors, Incorrective utterances, imitation, correction, and laziness. It is better for the parents to pronounce the word genuinely. It means that parents should give the real pronunciation to the child. It is better for the parents do not imitate the way child to produce the wrong pronunciation, because it will make the child becomes confuse how to differentiate the right or wrong words. Parents should make good connection with the child to build interaction. This interaction has function to know the child's language development. Parents should control the child from various media which is suitable to the child needs such as watching TV. So that his/her understanding and behavior will be suitable to his/her age. It is better for the parents to correct the child's pronunciation directly.

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