

FIRST LANGUAGE ACQUISITION IN EARLY CHILDREN 3-4 YEARS (Descriptive Qualitative Study in Parakanlima Village)

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Abstract: Language acquisition is a process that takes place in a child's brain to capture, produce, and use words for understanding and communication from when he or she acquires her first language or mother tongue. Language acquisition is a natural process in which a person masters language. Language acquisition is usually the result of verbal contact with native speakers of that language environment. This study aims to determine the acquisition of the first language in early childhood 3-4 years in Parakanlima Village. The method used in this study is a qualitative descriptive method. The respondents in this study were three parents and three children aged 3-4 years who lived in Parakanlima Village, Jatiluhur District, Purwakarta. The results of this study indicate that children are able to master the acquisition of the first language which is characterized by vocabulary that is in accordance with the stage of development of their age that they get in the family and surrounding environment.

Keywords: Early Childhood, Language, First Language Acquisition

Introduction

Language is a tool for communication, it can also be used to think, express feelings and through language we can accept other people's thoughts and feelings. Children's language development is a combination of social interaction, emotional development, cognitive development and physical-motor development. Children's language develops from the easiest to the most complex, gradually according to their age. In human life, language is first acquired through listening. It is evident that a child who is born does not have a single set of words to

communicate with his environment, but humans are gifted with tools for learning language known as language acquisition tools or the term is called LAD (Language Acquisition Device). They first heard or listened to the utterances that were born by the people around them. The term acquisition is used for the equivalent of the English term acquisition, namely the process of mastering a language that is carried out by a child naturally when he learns his mother tongue (native language) (Darjowidjojo: 2003).

In principle, language acquisition cannot be separated from the cognitive strategies used by children when they acquire language. The cognitive foundation of language acquisition in children is very easy to recognize. There are three main things in recognizing this cognitive basis, namely semantic development in children, initial syntactic development and active use by children of a kind of learning strategy (Idham: 2019). Acquisition of the first language or the mother tongue of children all over the world is the same. The similarity in the acquisition process is not only caused by the similarities in the biology and neurology of language, but also by the mental aspects of language (Suwardi: 2019).

The language acquisition stage is related to the child's language development. This is because a person's first language is acquired when he is a child. The first language acquisition stage is divided into four stages, namely the competency and performance acquisition stage, the semantic acquisition stage, the syntax acquisition stage and the phonological acquisition stage (Sodiq: 2000).

First, the stage of acquiring competency and performance. Competence is knowledge of the grammar of the mother tongue which is mastered by the child unconsciously. The grammatical consists of three components, namely semantics, syntax and phonology and is obtained gradually. As the center of language knowledge and development in the child's brain, competence requires performance assistance to overcome children's language problems. Performance is a child's ability to understand and decode in a receptive process and the ability to tell or decode in a productive process. So it can be concluded that competence is the "ingredient" and performance is the "tool" that bridges it.

Second, the semantic acquisition stage. Syntactic acquisition depends on semantic acquisition. Before being able to say any words at all, children diligently collect information about their environment. One of the early forms that children master is nouns, especially those that are familiar or close to where they live, for example family members, close family, pets, fruit and so on.

Third, the acquisition of syntax is the child's ability to express something in the form of construction or arrangement of sentences. The construction starts from a series of two words which is an arrangement formed by the child to express something.

Fourth, the acquisition of phonology or language sounds begins with the acquisition of basic sounds. According to Jakobson in Sodiq, (2000) the basic sounds in human speech are /p/, /a/, /i/, /u/, /t/, /c/, /m/ and so on. Then at the age of one year the child begins to fill in these sounds with other sounds, for example /p/ combined with /a/ becomes /pa/ and /m/ combined with /a/ becomes /ma/. After the child is able to produce sound, over time, the child will be more adept at producing sound which of course is influenced by the environment, cognitive and speech tools.

In the family environment, language acquisition for children aged 3-4 years is very complex. Some children aged 3-4 years are able to communicate well, with people around them and vice versa there are still some children who cannot communicate properly. Children's speech at the age of 3-4 years needs attention, especially parents and children must also be frequently invited to dialogue so that it makes it easier for children to acquire or master language, especially syntax acquisition. The level of acquisition of syntax in children is a continuum that starts from the utterance of one word, to simple sentences with more complex word combinations. In other words, the acquisition of syntax in children always goes through small things first and continues

on to bigger things, meaning that children master words, phrases and then move on to sentences (Firdhayanty, 2021).

In this case the acquisition of the first language is largely determined by the family, especially parents. Parents are the first stimulator for early childhood development. According to Purnamasari (2022), the role of parents has a central role in the process of child development and education. Based on the results of observations on several parents and children in Parakanlima Village which showed that the role of parents had not been maximized as the first stimulator for early childhood. Therefore, this research is shown to parents so that they have the insight to become the first stimulator in language acquisition for early childhood.

Methods

The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative method. In qualitative research, the formulation of the problem is taken from the case studies to be studied. The qualitative data collection technique that the researcher chose was through interviews and direct observation. Descriptive data analysis techniques in this qualitative research are in the form of analyzing, describing and summarizing events from data obtained through interviews or direct field observations. The purpose of the qualitative descriptive analysis is to fully and deeply describe the occurrence of the various phenomena studied. Respondents in this study were 3 parents who had children aged 3-4 years in Parakanlima Village.

Discussion

Language acquisition is an integral part of cognitive development as a whole and especially as part of the framework of symbolic functions (Gustianingsih, 2022). There are two views regarding language acquisition, namely language acquisition has a sudden or sudden start. Children aged around one year use language freedom, namely children use words loosely or apart from symbols in language to achieve various social goals, and the second view states that language acquisition in children occurs gradually arising from motor achievements, social and pre-linguistic cognitive abilities. A different view is that language development in children is related to their cognitive abilities (Suharti, et al 2021).

Language acquisition has a gradual beginning, arising from pre-linguistic motor, social and cognitive achievements. Acquisition of children's language can be said to have the characteristics of continuity, having a continuum, which moves from simple one-word utterances to more complex word combinations (syntax). Acquisition of the first language is one of the overall development of children to become social members of society. Language makes it easier for children to express their feelings, ideas and abilities in a way that is acceptable to society (Ahmadi: 2002).

The stages of child language development are as follows. In the early months (the first few months) vocalizations, crying, cooing and sounds that cannot be described occur, this occurs at the age of 3-4 months. The next stage is the babbling stage, at this stage continuous babbling occurs which can lead to vocalizations, especially to be able to produce vowel and consonant sounds. At this stage the sound is not obtained by understanding the meaning, it occurs at the age of 6-10 months. The third stage is the beginnings of language comprehension, this stage occurs in children aged 8-10 months, there is evidence that at this stage children begin to understand the introduction of children's symbolic movements, intonation, words and phrase structures. The next stage is the beginning of symbolic communication, which occurs at the end of 2 years of age. In addition to the development of vocabulary at this stage very quickly, children begin to indulge in what is called experimental linguistics. This stage is marked by the appearance of the Give me the ball or Give me the block utterance types. (Ahmadi 2020).

The first vocabulary he acquires at this stage is usually words denoting actions, qualities and nouns. The development of a child's first language is more easily marked than the words that are

able to be spoken. The number of words spoken by a child is an indicator or indication of his language development.

Language development in children aged 3-4 years begins to learn to construct interrogative sentences and has accumulated approximately 2000 vocabularies. As for aspects that need to be monitored from language development, namely being able to communicate with adults and other people, being able to communicate ideas through drama, play, or writing, knowing letters, having sufficient vocabulary and showing reading development (Indrawan: 2022). Children understand the word if, because or who, children are able to use 4-5 words in one sentence, children begin to use neat language structures, children are able to provide clearer articulations, and children are able to follow orders in 2-3 steps. Stimulation that can be given is starting to use sentences consisting of 3-4 words, talking about daily activities and playing with peers and speaking in sentences or reading longer stories.

The results of research in Parakanlima Village with three parents and three children aged 3-4 years as respondents indicated that there were different language skills.

Table. 1

Child Name: NAP

Age: 3 years 8
months

N0.	Nouns, Properties and Work	Mention by Children
1	Kertas	Ketas
2	Lilin	Lilin
3	Rumah	Rumah
4	Sayur	Sayur
5	Burung	Burung
6	Cantik	Cantik
7	Ramah	Ramah
8	Pintar	Pintar
9	Sabar	Sabar
10	Marah	Marah
11	Masak	Masak
12	Lari	Lari
13	Lompat	Lompat
14	Dorong	Dorong
15	Pergi	Pergi

From the presentation of the data above, it can be seen that the pronunciation of the vocabulary spoken by Naira is clear, this is in line with the statement of the parents, her language development is quite rapid, even when she was small she was always active in responding to the conversations of the people around her. The first word Naira uttered was 'mama' at the age of 6-7 months. Naira was fluent to speak at the age of 2 years. Because his mother always provides stimulus by getting used to telling stories before going to bed or just talking in daily activities.

Table. 2

Child Name: GB

Age: 3 years 5 months

N0.	Nouns, Properties and Work	Mention by Children
1	Kertas	Keltas
2	Lilin	Lilin
3	Rumah	Lumah
4	Sayur	Saluy
5	Burung	Bulung
6	Cantik	Cantik
7	Ramah	Lamah
8	Pintar	Pintal
9	Sabar	Sabal
10	Marah	Malah
11	Masak	Masak
12	Lari	Lali
13	Lompat	Lompat
14	Dorong	Dolong
15	Pergi	Pelgi

In the data table 2, based on the results of interviews and research conducted by researchers on Gibran, in the pronunciation of the vocabulary he uttered, there were obstacles in pronouncing the letters that should be the letters /r/ but when pronouncing children they became the letters /l/. According to his mother, at the age of 1 year Gibran began to respond to what was said by the people around him, but to have a dialogue between parents and children around the age of 2. Gibran first said the word 'mama' 'papa'. His mother always made it a habit to communicate after school and before going to bed. There are no obstacles encountered in the development of the language, but for the pronunciation of the letter that is less fluent (r), due to heredity because the mother is not fluent in pronouncing the letter.

Table. 3

Child Name: AFA
Age: 3 years 8
months

N0.	Nouns, Properties and Work	Mention by Children
1	Kertas	Ketas
2	Lilin	Lilin
3	Rumah	Wumah
4	Sayur	Sayuw
5	Burung	Buwung
6	Cantik	Tatik
7	Ramah	Wamah
8	Pintar	Pintaw
9	Sabar	Sabaw
10	Marah	Mawah
11	Masak	Masak
12	Lari	Lawi
13	Lompat	Lompat
14	Dorong	Dowong
15	Pergi	Pegi

In table 3, it can be seen that Ahmad has difficulty pronouncing the letter /r/ which is pronounced /w/, there are still unclear spellings such as /tatik/ which should be /pretty/. In acquiring his first language (mother tongue) by teaching Indonesian, and at the age of 1-2 years

he has started to actively respond to his interlocutors, according to his mother's narrative that Ahmad is still slurred so there is a disorder that causes him to be unable to pronounce the letter /r/ in a sentence say.

Factors that influence language development in children include:

1. High or low children's cognitive abilities will affect the speed of the child's language development.
2. Patterns of communication in the family. In a family where the communication patterns are many directions or relatively democratic interactions will accelerate the development of children's language, while passive interaction patterns will result in slow development of children's language.
3. Bilingualism (the habit of using two languages) Children who are raised in families whose more than one language will have better and faster language development than children who only use one language because children are used to using a variety of languages.
4. Health factors are factors that greatly influence children's language development, especially at the early age of life. If at the age of the first 2 years the child experiences continuous pain, this child tends to experience delays or difficulties in developing his language.
5. Gender, in the early stages of childhood there is no difference in vocalizations, but at the age of 2 years girls show faster development than boys.

Family relations, this is a process of experience of interacting and communicating with the family environment, especially with parents who teach, train and provide examples of language to children (Indrawan: 2022).

Conclusion and Recommendations

Language acquisition is the processes that occur in a child's brain when he acquires his mother tongue. First language acquisition occurs in a child's early life. The process of acquiring language is strongly influenced by parenting and the community environment, besides that natural cognitive aspects also play an important role in it. Based on the results of the discussion above, the conclusions obtained are that basically children aged 3-4 years in Parakanlima Village have mastered verbs, adjectives and nouns well, although there are still children who are not fluent in pronouncing letters such as the letter /r/ and /c/ due to his mother's heredity. In addition to the stimulus from parents by communicating after school and before going to bed, it is preferable at an early age like this that children are often taught to interact with the social environment so that they get language stimuli and new vocabulary that are recorded in the children's brains. Then as time goes by and the child's growth, the child will acquire a language other than the language taught by his mother, whether second, third or so on, depending on the social environment and cognitive level possessed by the child through the learning process, because the first language or mother tongue is a factor important in the success of children learning a second language.

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