

CHILDREN'S LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

The objective of this article is to describe how children's language is developed. The development of child's language actually begun when a child was born with language or a simple talk. First language is the language that is the primary language that is acquired which is called native language or mother tongue. This study is intended to children's language development and their social interaction. To get the data, four children asked to speak about everything of their interest. The process of recording was made as naturally as possible. All the data obtained were then used to facilitate the researcher in describing children's talk. As the result, children direct his attention to thing that language is easy to understand and they used primary interest to help them learn the language related to their interest. They also enjoyed the repetitive events of their life and used it strategies to help them in learning a language. Children can quickly acquire new words if they always heard a new language around them and automatically the development of their language will increased faster. Children learn language through their natural desire to call an object by its name and almost all of the words their produced were not clear enough. They often used a piece of dismembered words.

Key words: *Children, Language Development*

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Introduction

The mastery on how child learn to speak is unique and puzzle adults in understanding the real meaning of his speaking. The mental abilities of a child seem quite different in many ways, yet he/she masters the structure of his/her native language of a short one to five years child. What is more, each child is exposed to a different sample of the language and generally with little or no conscious tuition on part of his parents produces at essentially the same grammar. Each child rapidly becomes a fully fledged member of his language community, able to produce an endless variety of meaningful utterances even though he did not recognize yet in the language he has mastered.

The type of words a child uses in the first year as well as the reason a child uses the words and follows a pattern that shared by children across the world. As soon as a child begins to produce the first words are about objects, people, and actions (Merkel-Piccini, 2001). They might, "Bunda", "Ayah", "Minum", "Makan", etc. (there are all common a child first words. Moreover, Marekel-Piccini (2001) said that the child uses denial or rejection (no) and attributes the words such as red, small, hot, cool, etc. in his vocabulary.

Children are not simply imitating what they hears and going on around them. The learning processes involved are far more complex. From the moment they begin to talk, children seems to be aware that language is rule-governed, and they are engaged in an

active search for the rules that underlie the language to which they are exposed. Children language is never at any time a haphazard conglomeration of random words, or a sub-standard version of adult speech. Instead, every children at every stage possesses a grammar with rules of its own even though the system will be simpler than that of an adult.

Attention to the ways in which children move from one rule to another that language acquisition is not as uniform as was once thought. Different children use different strategies for acquiring speech. For example, some seem to concentrate on overall rhythm, and slot in words with the same general sound pattern. Whereas other prefer to deal with slots that are more abstract of particular interest is work which looks at how children cope with different language. This enables researcher to see if children have any universal expectations about how language behave, or whether they wait and see what their own particular language offers.

The clearest evidence comes from the very earliest stages of development. Nearly all the work which has been done on the development of grammar so far has focused on the pre-school period between about a year and half and five years of age. A brief examination of the outlines of this work should reveal the relevance of grammatical analysis for an understanding of cognitive development in the child. In grammatical development, when the child starts putting two words together one can begin investigating his

active grammar. The examples presented ("intak ue mak" means that he wants to have a cake) demonstrate that child language is structured from his point on. It soon can be characterized by hierarchal structures that it tends to be regular, that the structures change with age and that they do not always correspond to adult structures.

One cannot study of the child's active grammar until he starts putting two words together to make primitive sentences. This happen typically around eighteen months of age. Several American investigators have deal with this level. (Brain 1963; Brown and Fraser 1963; Miller and Ervin 1964), since their finding have been remarkably similar, it is possible here to speak in general from terms of the typical, two-word utterance.

Distributional analysis reveals that the child does not produce such utterances by mere unstructured juxtaposition of two words rather, two classes of words are revealed by analysis. There is a small class of what have been called "pivot word" by Braine 1963 or "operator" by Miller and Ervin 1964 and a large, open class of words, many of which were previously one-word utterances.

Then, on distributional grounds it seems that one of the classes is small and contains words of high frequency in the child's speech. The membership of this class is stable and fairly fixed; these words can be called pivots because other words can be attached to them. A pivot word may be the first or the second member of two-word sentences but

whichever it is, its position is fixed (at least in English and several other languages).

Based on the explanation above, the writer of this research intends to investigate how first-aged to fifth-aged children obtain the language.

Discussion

Many language theorists have defined various stages of language development. Most often these stages are named babbling, jargoning, one word utterances, two word utterances, and "all hell breaks loose" (Cole and Cole, Pinker, and Burling). During the babbling stage, children are learning how to produce the sounds that make up language, a process that Pinker feels is a prerequisite for language development. Jargoning appears around 12 months, and is described as the vocalization of syllable strings that sound similar to the language to which the child is exposed (Cole and Cole, 1996).

One word utterances or holophrases, are sometimes believed to stand for phrases or sentences (Cole and Cole, 1996). At 18 months, language development is quickly developing, in this stage children are increasing their vocabulary at a phenomenal rate of a new word in every two hours (Pinker, 1994). As two or three word utterances emerge these micro sentences that were reflected the language being acquired: in ninety-five percent of them, the words are properly ordered (Pinker, 1994). As Pinker's term "the all hell breaks loose stage" suggest this stage is when children rapidly acquire vocabulary and

grammar.

The developmental process of language acquisition is not completely understood yet because the process of acquiring a language occurs so quickly and with so many nuances and it is difficult to comprehend. Many different aspects of language and language development need to be explained before one theory could be universally accepted. Chomsky is one of the leading theorists in the nativist approach to language development (Cole and Cole, 1996). His primary arguments addressed the inability of such a theory to explain that children know a great more about language than they could have learned since they do not merely reproduce what they hear, rather they reconstruct the basic grammar rules (Chomsky, 1972).

Furthermore he stated that "the fact of all normal children acquire essentially comparable grammars of great complexity with remarkable rapidity, suggests that human beings are somehow specially designed to do this, with data-handling or 'hypothesis-formulating' ability of unknown character and complexity". Nativist theorists tend to feel that language is a maturation process and the learning theory is inaccurate. In line with this, Cole and Cole (1996) present Bruner's term of a "language acquisition support system," which explains that parental behaviors structure child's language environment to support development of language.

The idea of a language acquisition system is also used by Ervin-Tripp in "Some

Strategies For the First Two Years" to explain the ways that children understand and produce language. She suggested that there exist some prerequisites to language development. One such example is environmental input: merely hearing a language such as through television or radio broadcasts is not enough to acquire it, interaction was also take place (Ervin-Tripp, 1973).

Tripp divided that a language development system needs to include certain properties: 1) Selective retention of features in short-term memory, particularly order of acoustic input, 2) Phonological and semantic selection and reorganization for retention in long-term memory, 3) Interpretation templates, providing interpretations of structures according to the formal and semantic properties of sequences, 4) Successive processing by alternative heuristics, allowing shortcuts for frequent phrases, instances where nonlinguistic determinants are strong, and so on, 5) Formal feature generation, identifying abstract classes and providing marking of the lexicon.

Early language development involves many issues, including cognition, play skills, social interaction and oral-motor development. As children awaken to the world at birth, they start a long cycle of language development which involves the understanding (receptive) and production (expressive) of language. Since children's' language development is quite difficult to understand and the way how the children acquire the language is also different. This case is somehow quite interesting to be

investigated. Therefore, the researcher intends to conduct a research on how children's development is.

Methodology

The method used in this research is qualitative method. Qualitative research is not on numbers but on words and observations; stories, visual portrayals, meaningful characterizations, interpretations, and other expressive descriptions (Zikmund, 2000 in Alvara 2003). This study was a descriptive, qualitative and exploratory. It was descriptive because it only describes the existing phenomena as naturally as possible in natural speaking of the children. The main characteristic of this method is that the researcher has no control over the variables and she can only report what has happened or what is happening. Through this method, the researcher studied,

researched, concluded and specified the things that establish in general principle.

To get the data, four children asked to speak about everything of their interest. The data were obtained by means of recording a natural speaking of them. In collecting the data, The researcher used tape-recorder as introduced by Labov (1972) as stated in Agustien (2006). In this study, the process of recording was made as naturally as possible. All the data obtained were used to facilitate the researcher in analyzing them.

Findings

The topic discussion was somehow dependent on the children's interests. When the child's start putting two words together one can begin investigating his active grammar. Some words, phrase and sentences that recorded by the researcher as follows:

1. Fragment of pivot grammar

| Function of Sentence | Acehnese | Meaning |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Request | Ueweh | Cake |
| | Ie | Drink |
| Desire | Jak | Go |
| | Wo | Go back |

Based on the recorded data, it can be assumed that the production of the children's words are not clear yet. for instance, the word "ueweh" is supposed to be "kuweh" in Acehnese, but the children only say "ueweh"

which is not completed yet. This finding is similar to what had been investigated by Braine (1963) that the children at that stage produce unstructured words.

2. Function of two-word sentences in child speech

| Function of Sentence | Acehnese | Meaning |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Request | Mak bu | Asking to eat |
| | Tak lik | Asking to buy |
| Imperative | Tak no | Come here sister |
| | Tak yo | I am afraid sister |
| Describe event | Tak ulis | Sister do the writing |

| | | |
|--------------|------------|-----------------------|
| or situation | Nyan chiek | That is a grandfather |
|--------------|------------|-----------------------|

3. Function of three-word sentences

| Function of Sentence | Acehnese | Meaning |
|----------------------|------------------|----------------------------|
| Demonstrative | Yah, Unda hoe | Father, Where is Bunda |
| | Unda, nyoe weweh | Bunda, This is a cake |
| Desire | Yah, teuh ngin | I ask for ice cream father |
| | Mak, aje ro | Mom, buy me a new clothes |

4. Two-word or more sentences functioning as negative

| Function of Sentence | Acehnese | Meaning |
|-----------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Negative or forbidden | Han mamam | Don't want to eat |
| | Hana kut | Don't want to follow |
| | Han ek kek je | Don't want to dress |

In point 2, 3 and 4 above, children's produced more than a word. At this stage, children's language develop into putting word together to produce a sentence. But the sentence is not grammatically complete yet. This result is in line with Braine 1963, Brown and Fraser 1963; Miller and Ervin 1964.

The researcher also recorded some sentences that produced by the children. Some of them sometimes used Acehnese and Indonesia together. The sentences that recorded by researcher as follows:

a. Affirmative sentences

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Angat | "Delicious" | (Delicious) |
| 2. Balap toto | "Run fast car" | (The car run fast) |
| 3. Su nonok uek-uek | "Sound chicken uek-uek" | (The sound of chicken is uek-uek) |
| 4. Mak Nana jak la | "Mom Nana go school" | (Mom Nana want to go to school) |
| 5. Nyum aju | "Smile quickly" | (Please smile) |
| 6. Ajoeh koet | "Eat fish" | (Eat fish) |
| 7. Anoe lom Mak | "Take bath again Mom" | (Take bath more Mom) |
| 8. Jeb ie aju | "Drink water quickly" | (Please drink water) |
| 9. Hana ngat boeh pam | "Not delicious mango" | (This mango is not delicious) |

b. Negative sentences

- | | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Hantem | "Not want" | (Do not want) |
| 2. Han ek jak | "Not want go" | (You don't want to go) |
| 3. Loen han tung | "I no want" | (I don't want) |
| 4. Hana choek ajee | "No wear shirt" | (Doesn't wear shirt) |
| 5. Bek utet beh | "No follow ok" | (Do not follow ok) |
| 6. Han toek cok | "Cannot rich take" | (Cant rich to take it) |
| 7. Wawak hana get upuk | "Wawak no make kerupuk" | (Wawak does not make kerupuk) |
| 8. Hana ngat boeh pam | "Not delicious mango" | (This mango is not delicious) |
| 9. Abang hana jak kula | "Brother not go to school" | (Brother does not go to school) |

c. Interrogative sentences

| | | |
|-----------------------|---|------------------------------|
| 1. Aken? | “Why?” | (Why?) |
| 2. Peu kah? | “What you?” | (What do you see?) |
| 3. Inoe jeut? | “Here can?” | “Can I put it here?” |
| 4. Hp ayah pat? | “Handphone father where?” | (Where is father handphone?) |
| 5. Soe nyan mak? | “Who he/she mom?” | (Who is he/she mom?) |
| 6. Nyoe ajee soe? | “This dress who?” | (Whose dress is this?) |
| 7. Soe boe kot? | “Who buy fish?” | (Who bought a fish?) |
| 8. Supoe ilop nyoe? | “Whose sandal this?” | (Whose sandal is this?) |
| 9. Mamak alheuh alat? | “Mom finish pray?” | (Have you prayed Mom?) |
| 10. Pat udukek buku | “Where put book Nana?” Nana's book?) | (Where do you put Nana? |

d. Exclamation sentences

| | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|--|
| 1. Jeib ju! | “Drink fast” | (Please drink) |
| 2. Aab ju! | “Eat fast” | (Please eat) |
| 3. Aab Eh ju! | “Go bed fast” | (Go bed please) |
| 4. Bi ie aneuk! | “Give water little” | (Give a little water) |
| 5. Yaa bang Bayi! | “Afraid Brother Bahri” | (Afraid to see brother Bahri) |
| 6. Teb that woe! | “Very long go home” | (Its take too long you back home mommy) |
| 7. Jake en eudeh! | “Go walk there” | (Go to play there) |
| 8. Mamak atat nyeh! | “Mom sick yes” | (Are you sick Mom) |

Meanwhile, it is also found there are some production of different sentences. For example in affirmative, negative, interrogative and exclamation sentence. It can be assumed that, children can produce varieties of sentences.

Based on the data above, the researcher found that the children acquire and learn the language may be affected by the properties of each language. For example, the types of language could influence the order in which children acquire each system of the language and could also make some parts of the language more difficult or easier to acquire. The acquisition of a language may also be affected by social interaction and cognitive development. Children can acquire any language if placed in the appropriate speech community. In line with the finding

above, for children no matter where they are born, whether they are born in Aceh, Malaysia, China, Vietnamese, Africa etc., the language surround them will be easy for them to master well (Clark, 2002; Hornstein, 2003). Children learn language starting immediately from birth. They could learn from nothing and discover what is (and is not) represented in language (Clark, 2002). Then, the language environment of a children give them many opportunities to speak the new language and be understood.

Children direct his attention to thing that language is easy to understand and they used primary interest to help them learn the language related to their interest. They also enjoyed the repetitive events of their life and used it strategies to help them in learning a language. Children often used a piece of

dismembered words while they have to speak. Meanwhile, all of the children go through the distinct ability of language development that they begun from a babbling to a word, phrase and sentence. Unexpected, the children can quickly acquire new words if they always heard a new language around them and the development of their language automatically will increased more faster.

Conclusion

Children vary in their development of speech and language skill. However, they follow a natural progression or timetable for mastering the skill of language. Children learn the language through their natural desire to call an object by its name and almost all of the words their produced were not clear enough.

Sri Wahyuni, Children's Language Development

They often used a piece of dismembered words. The children's language environment was not brought a pressure to bear them as they learn the new word or language. The language that produced by children was not sequenced by grammar or vocabulary.

Moreover, much of the language they heard is simplified especially for them. Children did not let language that they did not understand confuse them. Children do not receive real feedback about the language they do produce, since it has been noted that parents rarely correct a children's mistakes. Thus, the grammar acquisition results from simply the necessity of using language to communicate, along with a need to express complex ideas.

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