



Language Acquisition Process in Children Aged 4 Years: Syntactic Development Stage

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to discuss children's first language acquisition process at age 4 years old. The purpose of this research is to explain how the children learn and acquire the language in real life. This research is conducted with descriptive qualitative research method. The data is taken from a child named Shakir Mumtaz who lives in Sunggal, Medan. The data obtained by the result of observation and interviews. The result of this research finds out that Shakir was a 4 years old's child who was able to pronounce the elements of complicated structure such as simple sentence or it called by later multiword stage of language development. Finally, in children's first language acquisition process, the role of their parents was so important. The child's language development can be built by the good interaction between parents and children. Thus, the researcher suggests to the parents to speak with good pronunciation to the early childhood.

Keywords: first language, language acquisition, acquisition of syntax.

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INTRODUCTION

Language is speech to convey something. Something referred to by the speaker can be understood by speech comrades through the language expressed. The most important function of language since a person learns a language is a communication. (Natsir, 2017). In addition to the understanding of language to convey something, language is a communication tool to convey the purpose of the speakers of the language. According to Natsir (2017: 21) in communication, each sentence spoken has a special function. Sometimes its function is to notify, ask or remind for an event or fact. Language is an arbitrary system of oral symbols used by members of a language society to communicate and interact with each other, based on the culture they have (Kurzon, 2019: 16). From the presentation, it can be concluded that language is arbitrary or, where you like it arises from the results of agreements that are in a community.

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Language can essentially be said to be a tool of communication, but not all tools of communication can be said to be language. Hockett in (Kurniati et al., 2015: 7) gives sixteen traits of communication that can be said to be language. If one of the sixteen elements is not present in a means of communication, then the means of communication cannot be said to be a language. For example, chickens can communicate with other chickens, chickens will 'crow'. The communication that occurs in chickens by 'crowing' is not using language but only a means of communication. Of the sixteen elements, one of them is language learning and language can be learned. In this case psycholinguistics, a science that examines language learning can be learned. Language learning whose meaning of language can be learned is divided into two points of discussion. The first point is the language learning obtained in humans since he is infants.

Language learning in infants is included in informal learning. The continuity of language learning in babies occurs unconsciously. The baby will not be conscious when receiving language learning. In addition to the baby not realizing that language learning has occurred in him, informal language learning is also coincidental and unplanned. In contrast to informal language learning which occurs unconsciously, formal language learning is aware of the occurrence of language learning. Generally, formal learning has careful and deliberate planning and planning. Formal language learning will focus on the structure of the language.

There are four points of conversation studied in psycholinguistics according to Sew (2007: 19) namely competence (understanding the meaning and meaning of the speech), production (teaching something like being taught), biological and neurological foundations (humans can speak), language acquisition (individual, how children acquire language). In this study, the researcher will focus on a discussion of first or mother tongue acquisition, and how a child acquired their language or his first language. The acquisition of the first language or commonly referred to as the mother tongue (first language acquisition) is closely related to all a person's activities in mastering and understanding his mother tongue (Jayendran et al., 2021: 4). Through the first language, a child will learn to communicate and learn to be a member of society through communication. Initially, babies are born without speaking skills, skills in speaking will be obtained after the acquisition of the first language or often referred to as the mother tongue they have obtained.

The mother tongue is obtained through interaction with the family and the surrounding community environment. This is what makes children acquire their first language. The first language in the child will be obtained if the child has not acquired the language at all. Then now the child acquires the language, then the language is said to be the first language or mother tongue. Language acquisition in children will take place naturally when the child learns the mother tongue, the child does not realize that they are acquiring their first language. In acquiring his first language the child does not see from the form of his language but the child only sees from his communication function.

Language is one of the tools to express feelings, thoughts, and desires in communicating. Gleason in Nuryani states that in psycholinguistics there is a process of how a child uses language as a means of communication, namely 1) the process of hearing, understanding, and remembering something that has been heard (comprehension); 2) a person who states something that is said (production), and 3) learn to understand or produce its first language (acquisition). This study, more focused on this research will discuss language acquisition (language acquisition). (Kurniati et al., 2015: 88).

This research will focus on first language acquisition, and how they get their first language with factors that affect language acquisition, one of which is socio-environmental

factors. The researcher will focus on acquiring the first language or mother tongue through the acquisition of syntax, namely simple sentences, question sentences, and command sentences. A simple sentence is derived from one clause, clause is a grammatical unit that has a function as a subject (S) and a predicate (P).

METHOD

This research uses a descriptive qualitative. The data used is in the form of transcripts of conversations taken on September 24 and 25, 2022. The subject in this study, namely a 4-year-old boy who lives in Sunggal, Medan. The object of study is the acquisition of the first language, namely the mother tongue in the stages of the syntactic acquisition of children at the age of 4 years. It includes simple sentences, question sentences, and command sentences. The informant in this study was a 4-year-old boy named Shakir Mumtaz who was born in Medan, on November 10, 2018, he was the third child of Mr. Zainul Akmal and Mrs. Melati. Everyday Shakir lives with his family, Shakir is also known to be very active in speaking, the language used by Shakir is the first language or commonly called the mother tongue that Shakir obtained, namely Indonesian, Rizki's daily life in communicating using his first language, namely Indonesian. The technique for collecting data in this study is observation and interviews. The observation technique is collecting data, by observing data sources. The data was obtained in the form of video and then transcribed interview data and analyzed it.

FINDING

The results of observation and interviews on data sources of first language acquisition with syntactic developments in the 4-year-old Shakir Mumtaz can include, namely simple sentences, question sentences, and command sentences which will be presented as follows.

1st Data

Shakir : Bukain mi rambutannya.
 P S Comp

Umi : Iya sini.

The above data was taken when Shakir was asking his mother to open the rambutan for Shakir. In addition, from the data above we can see Shakir's ability to communicate. Shakir has been able to capture the purpose and context of the communication.

2nd Data

Shakir : Umi, adek mau nonton You Tube.
 S P O

Umi : Sebentar umi mau nelpon nenek.

The data above was taken when Shakir saw that his brother was watching You tube and he also wanted to watch.

3rd Data

Shakir : Belikan adek ice cream, mi.
 P S O

Umi : *iya nanti sore kita beli tidur siang dulu.*

The above data was taken when Shakir was looking at an ice cream ad on You tube, Shakir asked his mother to buy the ice cream. In the sentence formed by Shakir has complete flexibility, then the sentence also has a function as a subject (S) and a predicate (P). This is included in a simple sentence. Shakir was already able to make a sentence of command, in which Shakir asked his mother to buy him ice cream.

4th Data

Umi : *Dek sini sekalian makan sama abang.*

Shakir : Adek mau ambil minum dulu, mi.

S P O

Umi : *Iya cepat.*

The above data was taken when Shakir was told to eat by his mother, then Shakir told his mother that he wanted to take a drink first before eating.

5th Data

Shakir : Abang nonton kereta balap ya?

S P O

Abang : *iya yang baru ini.*

The data above was taken when Shakir approached his brother, Bana, who was watching You tube. The data was taken when Shakir saw what his brother was watching.

6th Data

Shakir : Rambutannya masih banyak, mi?

S

Umi : *Masih, habiskan dulu ini.*

The above data was taken when Shakir was eating rambutan peeled by his mother. From the data above Shakir was able to make sentences. The sentence is a question sentence.

DISCUSSION

The exposure to the above data can be said that the syntactic development possessed by Shakir is very good. Shakir who is on data one and data two is already able to combine two or more words. In addition, the sentences spoken by Shakir can already create a complete sentence pattern that is simple in structure, in children of Shakir's age the syntactic development he has is very good. The development of the sentence possessed by Shakir is due to imitation. It was the impersonation of the first language or mother tongue that influenced the syntactic development of Shakir.

From the first data above Shakir can make a simple sentence that has a complete clause, the sentence has a function as a subject (S) and a predicate (P). The sentence is a command sentence, in which Shakir asks his mother to open a rambutan for him. However, from the second data, Shakir was able to make simple sentences. In the sentence, there are (S) and (P) in one sentence. In addition, the above sentence has complete

flexibility. This is included in a simple sentence, Shakir was also able to make an affirmative sentence in which Shakir wanted to tell his mother that he wanted to watch YouTube.

On the other hand, the fourth sentence Shakir can create a simple sentence that has a complete clause, the sentence has a function as a subject (S) and a predicate (P). The sentence entered into the affirmative sentence, which Shakir wanted to tell his mother that he wanted to take a drink first before eating. From the fifth above Shakir can make a simple sentence that has a complete clause, the sentence has a function as a subject (S) and a predicate (P), the sentence is a question sentence. In the sentence, the question can only be answered with 'yes' or 'no'. The sixth data denoted that sentence has no clause i.e. there is no one of the functions of Subject (S) and Predicate (P). In that sentence, Shakir asked a question to convince whether the rambutan was still available or not.

The first language Shakir acquired was Indonesian. Because of the family background, Mr. and Mrs. Shakir are from Medan so they always use Indonesian. Shakir also lives in a Residence in Sunggal where the environment uses Indonesian, which influenced the first language Shakir acquired was Indonesian. This is included in the social environmental factors. In children aged 4-5 years, language development in children develops very rapidly, the use of language in communicating is more productive, and in speaking grammar has begun to be more regular. As well in Shakir's speech, Shakir already can communicate, he can make simple sentences, question sentences, and command sentences. The more Shakir communicates, the more it will affect his language development.

CONCLUSION

From the presentation of the research that has been carried out, it can be concluded that the acquisition of the first language or mother tongue is included in informal language learning. Unconsciously Shakir had acquired his first language, Shakir used language as a means of communication, not as learning. The first language owned by Shakir is Indonesian. This is influenced by two factors, namely biological factors and environmental factors. Shakir was Malay but the surrounding environment uses Indonesian. In addition, the stage in language acquisition that Shakir is currently experiencing is the stage of many words, and already understands what he has spoken. Shakir has been able to create a complete clause, namely, there is a subject (S) and a predicate (P), and has understood the function of the sentence he has said. In addition, Shakir has been able to create and form sentences such as simple sentences, question sentences, and command sentences.

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