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THE LANGUAGE ACQUISITION OF DAILY WORDS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD (2 YEARS OLD)

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini membahas akuisisi bahasa anak usia dini (2 tahun) dengan fokus pada penguasaan kata sehari-hari. Proses penguasaan bahasa melibatkan faktor biologis dan sosial, di mana interaksi dengan lingkungan memainkan peran penting. Anak-anak mempelajari bahasa pertama mereka melalui komunikasi sehari-hari, bukan pengajaran formal. Studi ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif untuk mengamati dan menganalisis fonologi kata-kata yang diproduksi oleh anak usia 2 tahun, Salman. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa anak-anak pada usia ini mengalami perkembangan bahasa yang cepat, dengan kata-kata yang paling sering digunakan terkait dengan kebutuhan sehari-hari seperti makanan, bagian tubuh, dan anggota keluarga. Temuan ini penting bagi orang tua, pendidik, dan peneliti dalam mendukung perkembangan optimal anak.

ABSTRACT

This research addresses early childhood language acquisition (2 years old) with a focus on the acquisition of everyday words. The process of language acquisition involves both biological and social factors, in which interaction with the environment plays an important role. Children learn their first language through everyday communication, not formal teaching. This study used a qualitative descriptive method to observe and analyze the phonology of words produced by 2-year-old Salman. The results showed that children at this age experience rapid language development, with the most frequently used words related to daily needs such as food, body parts, and family members. These findings are important for parents, educators, and researchers in supporting children's optimal development.

INTRODUCTION

Humans acquire language because they are born with the innate ability and capacity to speak. Language acquisition occurs naturally and is influenced by two main factors. Firstly, biological factors involve the child's physical condition. Children born in normal conditions with functional body organs, and without physical disabilities such as deafness, muteness, intellectual disabilities, or stuttering, have the capability to acquire language. Secondly, social factors include interactions with people in the child's environment. Children learn their first language through natural acquisition, which happens through daily communication rather than formal teaching that requires specific teachers, places, or times. The child's first language typically corresponds to the regional language or the language spoken in the environment where they are raised. Language acquisition in early childhood is an important aspect of children's cognitive and social development. By the age of 2, children experience rapid language development, known as a "vocabulary explosion." Understanding this process is important for parents, educators, and researchers to support optimal child development.

At the start of language acquisition, a child focuses on listening and paying attention. Afterward,

the child attempts to imitate the words they have heard. Therefore, the first skill children develop is listening to others' conversations, followed by learning to pronounce words.

According to (Hoff 2014), the language environment that children are exposed to significantly influences their language acquisition process. The interactions with parents, caregivers, and the broader environment supply the necessary language input for children to develop their linguistic abilities. Despite this understanding, there remains a gap in our knowledge regarding the specific mechanisms through which two-year-old children acquire and effectively utilize daily vocabulary.

Language acquisition that begins in childhood is closely related to language development. As stated by (Safitri 2020), there are four phases of language development in children: (1) The Pre-linguistic Stage (from birth to 1 year), (2) The Holophrastic Stage (from 1 to 2 years), (3) The Two-word Stage (from 2 to 2 years and 6 months), and (4) The Early Grammar Stage (from 2 years and 6 months to 3 years and beyond). These phases are linked to the vocabulary that the child acquires.

Recent research conducted by (Romeo et al. 2017), demonstrates that children's exposure to conversations correlates with enhanced brain functions associated with language processing. This highlights the critical role of verbal interaction during early childhood in fostering language development. Nevertheless, additional research is warranted to gain a deeper understanding of how 2-year-old children specifically acquire and integrate daily vocabulary into their linguistic repertoire.

As explained by (Chater and Christiansen 2018), language acquisition is the process by which humans gain the ability to understand, produce, and use words for communication. This process involves various skills such as syntax, phonetics, and an extensive vocabulary. The language acquired can be vocal, as in spoken language, or manual, as in sign language. Language acquisition typically refers to first language acquisition, which examines how children learn their mother tongue, rather than second language acquisition, which looks at how children or adults learn additional languages.

This study examines the phonology of words produced by young children. Phonological research is essential for understanding the sounds of language and how they are produced, including vowels, consonants, and diphthongs. Vowels are speech sounds that are not obstructed when expelled from the lungs and are classified into single vowels (monophthongs) like a, i, u, e, o, and double vowels (diphthongs) like ai, au, oi. Consonants are speech sounds that are blocked as they exit the lungs, examples being p, b, m, w, f, v, t, d, n, c, j, k, g, h. Consonant clusters are combinations of multiple consonants. This study specifically focuses on the phonology of words produced by 2-year-old children, utilizing a descriptive qualitative method.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research employs qualitative methods to assess early childhood language acquisition. Data collection involved face-to-face observation and documentation of a 2-year-old named Salman over two meetings. Researchers used structured observation sheets to record the frequency and context of daily word usage, supplemented by photographs for accuracy. The "simak libat cakap" technique was used, where the researcher listened to and interacted with the child, encouraging word use. Findings were recorded to provide a representative picture of the child's language abilities and speech background.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The results of observations show that 2-year-old children have a fairly rapid language development. The words that are most often spoken by children are words related to their daily needs, such as food, body parts, and family members. They learn language by listening to people around them speak and by imitating what they hear.

Discussion

In this study, we used one male sample aged 2 years. We aimed to examine his speaking skills, considering his age. We intended to identify any significant factors influencing his development, supported by the roles of parents, the environment, and cognitive maturity.

Name	: Sulthan Salman Sihotang
Nickname	: Salman
Place & Date of Birth	: Tangerang, July 06th 2022
Age	: 2 Years
Address	: Cluster Mutiara Curug 1 blok A No 2, sukabakti, curug.

Figure 1. Observation with Salman

Below is a table of data from observations that researchers have made during several meetings.

No.	Original Words	Spoken Words
1.	Abang	Babang
2.	Apel	Apey
3.	Ayah	Yayah
4.	Ayam	Yam
5.	Bola	Ola
6.	Dadah	Dada
7.	Dot	Dodot
8.	Hidung	Idung
9.	Jeruk	Jeuk
10.	Kakak	Kak
11.	Mamah	Mama
12.	Makan	Mamam
13.	Mata	Tata
14.	Mbak	Bak
15.	Minum	Nunum
16.	Mobil	Ombim
17.	Motor	Oton
18.	Nasi	Aci
19.	Perut	Peyut
20.	Pipi	Pipi
21.	Pisang	Isang
22.	Pintu	Intu
23.	Rambut	Ambut
24.	Sepatu	Patu
25.	Susu	Cucu

Table 1. Data observation results

In phonological analysis, we transcribe data in phonetic and word form. The number of words we obtained in our observations was 25 daily words in early childhood. From our observations, we found that there were still several words that did not match their pronunciation, and their phonetics had certainly changed from the original. The results of the phonological analysis can be seen in the discussion table below.

No.	Original Words	Spoken Words
1.	Abang	Babang
2.	Apel	Apey
3.	Ayah	Yayah
4.	Ayam	Yam
5.	Bola	Ola
6.	Dadah	Dada
7.	Dot	Dodot
8.	Hidung	Idung
9.	Jeruk	Jeuk
10.	Kakak	Kak
11.	Mamah	Mama
12.	Makan	Mamam
13.	Mata	Tata
14.	Mbak	Bak
15.	Minum	Nunum
16.	Mobil	Ombim
17.	Motor	Oton
18.	Nasi	Aci
19.	Perut	Peyut
20.	Pipi	Pipi
21.	Pisang	Isang
22.	Pintu	Intu
23.	Rambut	Ambut
24.	Sepatu	Patu
25.	Susu	Cucu
Total Kata		25 Kata

Table 2. Acquisition at the phonological level

Based on the pronunciation of the words above, 25 words are produced. The sample contained 19 words that still did not match the original pronunciation. The vowel sounds [a], and [i], that appear when 2-year-old children speak can be categorized according to word acquisition, in addition to the appearance of the vowels [ə] and [o].

Original Words	Spoken Words
The sound of vocal [a] appears in the word	
“Rambut”	/ambut/
“Nasi”	/aci/
“Apel”	/apey/
The sound of vocal [ə] appears in the word	
“Perut”	/peyut/
“Jeruk”	/jeuk/
The sound of vocal [i] appears in the word	
“Hidung”	/idung/
“Pisang”	/isang/
“Pintu”	/intu/
The sound of vocal [o] appears in the word	
“Bola”	/ola/
“Mobil”	/ombim/
“Motor”	/oton/

Table 3. The vowel sounds

The consonant sounds that appear in children aged 2 years correspond to these data,such as : [b], [c], [d], [m], [n], [k], [p], [t], and [y].

Original Words	Spoken Words
The consonant sound [b] appears in a word	
“Abang”	/babang/
“Mbak”	/bak/
The Consonant sound [c] appears in a word	
“Susu”	/cucu/
The consonant sound [d] appears in a word	
“Dadah”	/dada/
“Dot”	/dodot/
The consonant sound [m] appears in a word	
“Mamah”	/mama/
“Makan”	/mamam/
The consonant sound [n] appears in a word	
“Minum”	/nunum/
The Consonant sounds [k] appear in words	
“Kakak”	/kak/
The Consonant sound [p] appears in a word	
“Pipi”	/pipi/
“Sepatu”	/patu/
The consonant sound [t] appears in a word	
“Mata”	/tata/
The consonant sound [y] appears in a word	
“Ayah”	/yayah/
“Ayam”	/yayam/

Table 4. The consonant sounds

Based on the results of our observations that match the data presented above, it is evident that the children observed have been able to pronounce words that are close to the original words. The children's ability to articulate these words is generally appropriate for their age, demonstrating typical language development patterns. (Von Holzen and Bergmann 2021). While some words are simplified or altered, they remain understandable within the context of early childhood language acquisition.

1. Vowel Sound [a]:

The pronunciation of the vowel sound [a] shows consistency across several words. For example, the word "Rambut" is pronounced as "Ambut," and "Nasi" is pronounced as "Aci." The children demonstrate an ability to approximate the original vowel sound with minimal distortion (Immonen, Alku, and Peltola 2022).

2. Vowel Sound [ə]:

The sound [ə] in "Perut" is altered to "Peyut,". This modification is common in early childhood language acquisition, where children often add extra sounds to make words easier to pronounce. (Fló et al. 2019).

3. Vowel Sound [i]:

The vowel sound [i] in "Hidung" is pronounced as "Idung." This change suggests that the children are simplifying consonant clusters and making the words easier to say (Garmann et al. 2021).

4. Vowel Sound [o]:

The sound [o] in "Bola" becomes "Ola," showing that the initial consonant is often dropped, which is typical for young children who are still developing their speech clarity (Von Holzen and Nazzi 2020).

5. Consonant Sound [b]:

Words like "Abang" becoming "Babang" and "Mbak" becoming "Bak" show that the consonant sound [b] is often omitted or simplified, a common trait in early speech development (Másdóttir and Stokes 2016).

6. Consonant Sound [c]:

The word "Susu" is altered to "Cucu," indicating that the [s] sound is sometimes replaced with a [c] sound, reflecting the child's developmental stage in mastering different consonants (Trecca et al. 2020).

7. Consonant Sound [d]:

The word "Dadah" is simplified to "Dada," indicating that children might omit repetitive sounds within a word to ease pronunciation. (Brown 2008).

8. Consonant Sound [m]:

In "Makan" becoming "Mamam" and "Mamah" becoming "Mama," the children exhibit a preference for repeating syllables, a characteristic pattern in early language acquisition. (Dispaldro 2014).

9. Consonant Sound [n]:

In "Minum" becoming "Nunum", this illustrates that in the early stages of language learning, children often repeat certain sounds to facilitate their understanding and language production. (Onnis et al. 2016).

10. Consonant Sound [k]:

In "Kakak" becoming "kak", this shows that in the early stages of language learning, children often simplify words by removing certain sounds to facilitate their understanding and language production. (Hovhannisyan et al. 2023).

11. Consonant Sound [p]:

The word "Pipi" remains unchanged, showing that the consonant sound [p] is easier for children to pronounce correctly in some contexts (Crowe and McLeod 2020).

12. Consonant Sound [t]:

In "Mata" becoming "Tata", this shows that in the early stages of language learning, children often repeat certain sounds to facilitate their understanding and language production. (Nora et al. 2017).

13. Consonant Sound [y]:

In "Ayah" becoming "Yayah", this shows that in the early stages of language learning, children often repeat certain sounds to facilitate their understanding and language production. (Vihman 2017).

The observations indicate that the children are progressing well in their language development. They can pronounce words that are recognizable and often understandable, though with some predictable simplifications and modifications. These changes align with typical patterns in early childhood language acquisition, such as the omission of initial consonants, simplification of consonant clusters, and repetition of syllables.

The children's ability to understand and respond to spoken commands non-verbally also reflects their growing comprehension skills, which is an integral part of language development. As they continue to grow, their pronunciation will likely become more accurate, and their vocabulary will expand, reducing the number of altered or simplified words. (Jin et al. 2023).

Overall, the data supports that these children are on a normal developmental trajectory for their age, showing expected patterns of language acquisition and pronunciation.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this research on the language acquisition of daily words in early childhood, particularly focusing on 2-year-old children, underscores the critical role of parental interaction, environmental factors, and early language environments in shaping language development. The findings emphasize the importance of understanding the patterns of daily word acquisition, factors influencing language growth, and markers of typical and atypical language development to support optimal language acquisition in young children. By providing insights for parents, educators, and researchers, this study contributes to enhancing early language skills and fostering a deeper understanding of language development processes in early childhood, ultimately paving the way for effective interventions and support strategies worldwide.

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