



Representations of First Language Acquisition in the Speech of Three Years Old

Andhio Harsanta¹, Aulia Febriani^{2*}, Mujadid Al-Ahmadan³, Shilfa Luthfiah⁴, Nargis⁵

^{1,2,3,4,5} Muhammadiyah University of Tangerang

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*Correspondence: Aulia Febriani

Email: auliafebriani215@gmail.com

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Abstract: The study aims to represent how three-year-old children output their language acquisition. As we know, language acquisition is one of the factors in a child's development. Language acquisition which is a process in humans in obtaining the ability to understand a language that becomes the foundation in the form of sentences to communicate. This research is descriptive qualitative research with the stages of data collection, data analysis, and data presentation. The sources and data in this study are transcriptions of recordings of verbal speech of a 3-year-old child named Hanah Shaqueena. The data has been found in this study, there are 4 types of sentences in terms of syntactic form produced by a 3-year-old child named Hannah Shaqueena, namely Declarative Sentence Representation, Interrogative Sentence Representation, Imperative Sentence Representation, and Exclamatory Sentence Representation.

Keywords: Language Acquisition, Language Development, Sentence

Introduction

An important factor of your child's growth is conversation. They develop language proficiency from this and are inspired to participate in more social interaction. When a toddler is between the ages of 18 months and 3 years old is when parents should talk to them the most. Children at this age are more able to comprehend what you are saying because they have learnt some basic words.

Therefore, the first critical step in a child's development is to learn how to speak. It is important for children to develop their language skills as they grow older because this helps them communicate with others and understand what they are saying. Children's language development is the child's ability to respond to sounds, follow commands, and speak politely (Arsa et al., 2019). The ability to speak effectively also has a positive impact on children's self-esteem, which can make it easier for them to feel good about themselves and their abilities. Education expert and psychologist from the United States Dr. (Hatch, 1989) developed intelligence into eight concepts of intelligence. One of them is linguistic intelligence or language.

Language acquisition is a process by which humans acquire the ability to understand language, as well as generate or use words and sentences to communicate. Language acquisition is one of the characteristics humans because non-humans do not communicate with using language (Friederici, 2011). Meanwhile according to Osherson (1995), ordinary language acquisition refers to first language acquisition, which is learning how to acquire their native language. It is different from acquisition of a second language related to acquisition additional languages, both for children and adults. So, we know that language obtained involves structure, rules, and representation. So that successfully use the language, one must have ability about phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and extensive vocabulary. Language can be realized as in speech or manual as in sign. Language capacity humans are represented in the brain. Despite the human language capacity limited, one can say and understand the amount unlimited sentences, which are based on principles syntax is called recursion.

The development of language acquisition is not determined by age, but leads to motor development. However, this development is strongly influenced by the environment (Sentosa & Apriliani, 2020). At the beginning of language acquisition, a child will be more silent, listening, and listening without giving any speech reactions (Yuniarsih et al., 2013). This means that the first maturity a child masters is listening to other people talk. However, as he grows older, the growth of his speech organs also improves. After that, the child will try to accept and imitate the words he has heard both from his parents, family, and the surrounding environment.

Alwi (2003) states that based on their syntactic form, sentences can be divided into; (1) declarative or news sentences; (2) imperative or command sentences; (3) interrogative or question sentences; and (4) explanative sentences. A declarative sentence is a statement sentence addressed to another person with the expectation that the person will respond with a response that can be seen from the eyes, expression, and sometimes accompanied by a nod of the head or a yes (Tarmini, 2013). Imperative sentences are sentences that command, order, and request that ask speech partners to do what the speaker wants. These imperative

sentences can be in the form of command sentences, appeal sentences, and prohibition sentences (Manaf, 2010). An interrogative sentence is an interrogative sentence that depends on the type of answer desired or expected. There are two types of answers. Firstly, answers that require yes or no. Second, an answer that requires an explanation of the information asked (Tarmini, 2013). An exclamative sentence is a sentence that expresses admiration or amazement at something (Alwi, 2003).

Research on children's syntactic development has been conducted by previous researchers. (Suparman, 2022) examined the problem of language acquisition of 3-year-old children in Palopo. The results of this study show that some phonemes are still difficult to pronounce by the research subjects, namely not yet able to pronounce apicoalveolar /r/ and lamionalveolar /z/ phonemes, cannot distinguish between bilabial /p/, labiodental /f/, labiodental /v/ sounds.

Manshur Ali (2021) studied the language acquisition of children aged 3-4 years in Tegalrejo Village, Banyuwangi in psycholinguistic studies. The result of this study is that 3-year-old children are able to communicate with their interlocutors using simple sentences. The pronunciation of consonant letter /r/ and consonant cluster has not been mastered. Children who are 3.5 years old can utter declarative, interrogative sentences. He can express his mastery of some objects around him through storytelling. Children aged 4 years old have increased language production. Language acquisition factors are biological, environmental, cognitive, and electronic media that are often accessed such as gadgets and television.

Nursalam (2018) examines the representation of sentences in the speech of children aged 3.6 years. Based on the data, there are four types of sentences spoken by 3.6-year-old children, namely command sentences (imperative), questions (interrogative), exclamation (interjection), and news (declarative). Based on the four types of sentences, 3.6-year-old children are able to say sentences grammatically but have not been able to use sentence speech perfectly because the syntactic elements are not complete.

The studies that have been revealed serve as a foundation in examining syntactic representations of 3-year-old children. This research is different from previous research. This study specifically discusses aspects of syntactic speech of 3-year-old children which include interrogative sentences, declarative sentences, interjection sentences, and imperative sentences. It is different from the objectives of the three previous studies which discuss the problem of children's language acquisition which includes the process of morphology, phonology, and syntax of children with their declarative and imperative sentences. The subject of this research is different from the social background of the previous research subjects.

The selection of research subjects for 3-year-old children is based on the rationalization that children at the age of 3 already have vocabulary in their language acquisition so that they are able to say sentences with a number of words of 2 to 4 words. The research focused on revealing the representation of children's sentences, including declarative sentences, imperative sentences, interrogative sentences, and interjection sentences. The results are expected to contribute to the theory of child language acquisition. Practically, the research is expected to be the foundation of psycholinguistics learning.

Methodology

This research is descriptive qualitative research with the stages of data collection, data analysis, and data presentation. The sources and data in this study are transcriptions of recordings of verbal speech of a 3-year-old child named Hanah Shaqueena. She resides in Teluknaga Seliong Village, Tangerang Regency, Banten Province. This research subject is the last child. The research subject is the younger cousin of the researcher, making it easier for researchers to collect data. The subject has Indonesian as her first language (B1) and has active behaviour in communication. This research focuses on children's language acquisition at the age of 3 years, because at that age children are in a productive period in language acquisition and errors often occur in the language process. Verbal speech data was obtained when Hanah was playing with her friend. The transcription of speech is presented and analysed based on the syntactic level which refers to interrogative, declarative, imperative, and interjection sentence forms. The data collection technique used is through recording and then converted into writing. Recording was done mainly in Hanah's activity as the subject by using one unit of smartphone.

The data analysis stage in this study went through three stages, namely (1) reduction, (2) presentation, and (3) conclusion drawing (Miles, 2014). First, the reduction stage is carried out in four ways, namely (1) transcribing the speech data into written text (2) the transcribed data is then identified in accordance with the research objectives, (3) classifying based on the research objectives, namely, the representation of interrogative sentences, declarative sentences, imperative sentences, and interjection sentences, and (4) interpreting the data that has been classified. Second, the presentation stage, which is presenting the data that, has been classified into a table. Third, the conclusion drawing stage as the final stage by re verified the initial data.

Result and Discussion

Based on the data that has been found in this study, the research results are as follows. There are 4 types of sentences in terms of syntactic form produced by a 3-year-old child named Hannah Shaqueena. This can be seen in the following discussion.

Declarative Sentences Representation

The declarative sentences spoken by Hanah who is still 3 years old in general already has grammatical meaning. However, she still uses a lot of non-standard diction. This is evidenced by the following data below;

- a) "Gak bisa dicolet, tuh."

The sentence provides information that there is something that (lipstick) cannot cross out on Hanah's cheeks. Syntactically, the sentence is incomplete because it lacks the object element. The syntactic function of the sentence only consists of predicates and complementary words so it is not considered an effective sentence. The declarative sentence uttered by Hanah's previous declarative sentence grammatically has meaning, but there is

an error in the diction selection process. The error lies in the mention of the word *colet* which should be *coret*.

b) “Bisa dimainin”

The sentence implies that he was distracted while playing with his friend by switching his focus to the researcher's mobile phone case, then saying that the accessory can be played (*Bisa dimainin*). However, the sentence is not perfect because there is no subject and object.

c) “Lagi pake baju”

In this sentence, Hanah wants to say that her brother did not come with her because he was wearing his clothes (because he had finished bathing). The sentence is ineffective because it lacks the subject in pronunciation.

d) “Aku minum”

In this sentence, Hanah wants to inform that she is drinking (*Aku minum*). Hanah's declarative sentences tend to repeat sentences that are often heard by people around her. In addition, children at this age will be able to record all the information they see and hear. Children at this age will be able to record all the information they see and hear. This is what Hanah says when she gets the desire to do something.

e) “Itu temennya aku”

In this utterance, Hanah wants to tell the person she is with that the person who passed by earlier is her friend. The sentence is less specific because it does not mention the object it refers to.

f) “Ada di laundry”

The declarative sentence uttered by Hanah when answering the question that there was no money for snacks, she replied that there was money in the laundry. Hanah uses laundry diction which is vocabulary from English. The word is often spoken because of the influence of the surrounding environment. The words that children will acquire at the beginning of their speech are determined by their environment so that children who are directed and trained to speak well at all times, their language acquisition will be good (Aziz, 2012). The sentence is also incomplete because there is no subject.

g) “Aku udah”

The sentence is classified as declarative, because the subject of the research intends to tell or announce to the speech partner that he had reached the top position in the game. The sentence is imperfect because it does not contain the adverb that the speaker intends so that it can lead to misconceptions.

h) "Gak bisa ini mangga kecil."

The sentence is classified as declarative, because the research subject tells the speech partner about the object he owns. The research subject says that the small mango cannot be cooked when he is playing cookery. The sentence shows that the child can express declarative sentences well because they have knowledge about what the speech partner is asking.

i) "Ini semangka besar, ini semangka kecil"

The sentence is classified as declarative, because Hanah wants to tell her speaking partner that there is a stone that looks like a large watermelon and a small watermelon that has been cut. The sentence is in accordance with what Hanah wants to mean.

j) "Gak ada lagi."

When playing cookery, Hanah wanted to tell her friend that what she was selling had run out, but the word was incomplete when pronounced because there was no subject, predicate, and object words. But the sentence could still be understood with the help of Hanah's action.

k) "Kan aku jualan"

Hanah's declarative sentence means that Hanah wants to tell her speech partner that she is selling. In the sentence, there is an additional word *-kan* which is an informal form. The sentence can still be understood by Hanah's speech partner.

Interrogative Sentence Representation

Interrogative sentences are question sentences asked by Hanah directly without paying attention to the syntactic aspects and the perfection of the sentences she speaks. The sentence is shown in the following data below;

"Pesen apa?"

The interrogative sentence "pesen apa?" is an incomplete interrogative sentence. The sentence lacks a subject element. The subject in the sentence is omitted because the sentence is addressed to Hanah's friend, but not named. This makes the sentence syntactically incomplete. In addition, the utterance of the sentence is considered incomplete because there is no word "want/will" to emphasize the meaning of the sentence. The lack of diction in Hanah's speech is still considered reasonable. A 3-year-old child like Hanah does not yet have enough acquisition and appropriate word order.

Imperative Sentence Representation

Imperative sentences are command sentences spoken by Hanah so that her friend follows her will. This sentence can be identified through the following data below;

“Jangan bersik!”

The sentence can be categorised as a command sentence because it is characterised by the command word “jangan bersik”. In addition, when Hanah said the sentence, it was marked by the use of high intonation on the word *bersik* and low intonation at the end of her speech. This is what makes the sentence categorised as an imperative sentence. Grammatically, the imperative sentence means telling her friend to be quiet. The sentence is syntactically incomplete, because there is no subject. The utterance is part of Hanah's way of understanding the situation and her sensitivity to the environment around her, despite not being able to say words perfectly due to the limitations of her speech.

Interjection / Exclamatory Sentence Representation

An interjection sentence is an exclamation sentence that is spoken to convey a certain feeling. The interjection sentence can be found in the following data below;

F: Hanah kemarin ke kebun binatang liat apa aja?

H: “Liat monkey, jerapah, kuda, sama elang.”

F: “Seneng gak ke kebun binatang?”

H: “Seneng!”

Based on the speech event above, the sentence is an exclamative sentence because the utterance (1) “Liat monkey, jerapah, kuda, sama elang.” and (2) “seneng”. The sentences are classified as exclamative/interjection, because sentences (1) and (2) uttered by the research subject express admiration or sentences that show the speaker's feelings. The sentences were uttered by the research subjects to express their excitement when seeing animals in the zoo.

Through the analysis of the data presented earlier, it is known that children are able to represent various types of sentences or phrases even though they are not perfect. (Tarigan, 2011) says that the maturity of language competence is determined by biological, cognitive, and social aspects. Children aged 3 years can produce declarative sentences, imperative sentences, interrogative sentences, and interjection sentences. The sentences produced by children are generally determined by cognitive elements. The sentence patterns spoken by children at this age are not syntactically complete because there are still limitations in choosing syntactic functions.

The influence of the social environment is also considered to be something that supports children's language competence because children's vocabulary growth is obtained through their social environment. This is what happened to Hanah as a 3-year-old child. In general, the speech produced by Hanah is influenced by her social environment.

Conclusion

The conclusion that the researcher wants to provide is it was known that children were able to represent various types of sentences uttered even though it was not perfect enough. The sentence patterns which spoken by the children in this age were not properly because there so much limitations within children in choosing some syntactic functions. But in Hannah case was quite different, she has a significant acquisition of language because she surrounded by a good social environment to support her language acquisition. It was proved by the data obtained from Hannah which state that she has 4 types of sentences in terms of syntactic produced by her, namely Declarative Sentence Representation, Interrogative Sentence Representation, Imperative Sentence Representation, and Exclamatory Sentence Representation.

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