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## **Process of language Use and Development: Case Studies in 6 Years of Age**

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### **Abstract**

The aim of this research is to determine the process of first language acquisition and development in 6 year old children. The method used in this research is a qualitative analysis method. The technique used in processing data and obtaining data is through observation and interviews with parents and children directly (face to face). The results of the research show that children's language development goes through several patterns, namely crying, cooing, moaning, intonation patterns, one-word speech, two-word speech, data inflections, interrogative sentences, rare/complex constructions, and mature speech. Furthermore, there are several levels of children's language, namely pre-speech, first words when names appear, word combinations and grammar. Meanwhile, there are several ways for children to acquire language, namely through acquisition and teaching. There are four factors in language acquisition, namely biology, environment, intelligence, and motivation. Parental involvement and supervision also greatly influences the complex process of children's language development.

**Keywords:** Language acquisition, children's language development, Children Language

### **Introduction**

In everyday human life, the main thing besides thinking is language. Language has a tremendous influence and is part of what distinguishes humans from animals. (Akhadiah, 2018). Language is a very important tool in developing yourself in all fields. With language learning, one will be able to understand how he is, his family, his environment, how he expresses his opinion of what he thinks and feels. Because basically language is a tool in communicating. (Aspo dkk, 2016). Language is the most important means of communication for human beings. Language is so dynamic that it can evolve continuously. Language is used

by humans to socialize, and to express their thoughts. Therefore, language is the most basic need for mankind.

How humans acquire language is an amazing and hard-to-prove problem. Various theories from different disciplines have been put forward by researchers to explain how this process occurs in children. It is acknowledged that, consciously or unconsciously, linguistic systems are properly mastered by children's individuals even though they are generally not in formal education. The process of human language development is called language acquisition. Language learning and language acquisition are the two processes that go into teaching youngsters to speak. The study of language acquisition is crucial, particularly for those working in the teaching of languages. A sufficient knowledge of the process and the essence of language acquisition will help determine success in the field of language teaching.

Among the biggest and most astounding accomplishments of humankind is the ability for youngsters to learn language. That's why there's a lot of attention on this problem. For over 20 years, language learning has been the subject of extensive research. Since then, a great deal has been discovered about the speech, comprehension, and language usage of young people, but relatively little is known about the actual process of language development. It is important to understand that the process of acquiring language is primarily influenced by the intricate interplay of biological, cognitive, and social development.

The process of language acquisition and development in this child has been studied before, among other research carried out by Enjang Burhanuddin Yusuf (2016) entitled Development and Language acquisition of Children. This study shows that language as a means of communication is acquired by children through several stages little by little. The child will acquire his first language in a unique way. This is relevant to Ruly Adha's study, entitled Early Childhood Language Acquisition and Development phenomena, which shows that since birth, a human has begun to interact or communicate with his parents using simple language that is still in the form of gestures, and then develops until the child is able to use language. The study was conducted by Indah Permatasari Suardi (2019) entitled First Language Acquisition of Children in Early Age. This study showed that early childhood language acquisition in the process of language acquisition, is obtained through the imitation process of what is heard and practised with the language and consonants of words that they have. The difference between the previous research and this study is that in this study it is a case study that further shows how the development process of language acquisition in children through case studies at the age of 6 years.

Based on the above description, the aim of this study is to learn about the process of first language acquisition and development in a six-year-old child and his ability to express thoughts in social relationships with the basic qualities of language that the child can acquire such as reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

## **Literature Review**

### **1. Children's language acquisition**

Language is a form of communication that humans naturally acquire from the moment they are born. A child's mastery of a language starts with acquiring their first language, sometimes referred to as their mother tongue. The process of language acquisition is a protracted journey that begins when a youngster lacks knowledge of any language and culminates in the ability to speak. Language acquisition or language acquisition is a process that takes place in a child's brain when he acquires his or her first language or mother tongue. (Fatmawati, 2015).

Language acquisition can be grouped into first language acquisition, second language acquisitions, and re-acquisitions. First language acquiring is the first language acquired from birth, second linguistic acquisition is the language acquired after a first language has been obtained, and repeat-acquired is a language that was once gained now recovered for a certain reason.

According to Dardjowidjojo (2008), the term "acquisition" is used to translate English, an acquisition that is understood as the process of natural language mastery of a child as he or she learns his or her mother tongue. According to Chaer and Agustina (2014) that the acquisition of a second language or bilingualism is a gradual disadvantage that begins with the mastery of the first language (B1) plus a little knowledge of the second language (B2), then B2's mastery increases gradually, until finally B2 is mastered as well as B1. According to Akhadijah, S., dkk in (1997:22) second language acquisition is the process when a person acquires another language after first he mastered to a certain extent of his first language. From the understanding of the experts above it can be concluded that the concept of second language acquiring is a process in which one has mastered its first language first then acquires a second language just as well as the first.

Mangantar Simanjuntak (1990) argues that language acquisition means that the language mastery of each individual is different, cannot be directly and can only be said to be active among children aged 2 - 6 years. He explains that the study of linguistic acquisition is very important. As Mangantar Simanjuntak says, in the age range of 2 to 6 years, children are actively gaining influence from their surroundings in the acquisition of their language.

### **2. Theories of language acquisition**

#### **a) Behaviorism theory**

In the theory of behaviorism, one's behaviour is observed directly then the relationship between stimuli and responses is also directly observed. For instance, if a child speaks a word, it may be that he or she is criticized by his or her parents or by someone else who hears it. However, when the child pronounced correctly, he would not get criticism from anywhere because his pronouncements were correct.

#### **b) Chomsky's Nativism Theory**

According to Chomsky, language can only be fully understood by humans, it is impossible for animals to understand or master human language. This stream also

argues that language is something so complicated that it is not possible to master it in a short time only through 'induction'.

**c) Cognitive theory**

Cognitive theory, pioneered by Jean Piaget (1954). He says language is one of many abilities that come or come from cognitive maturity.

**d) The theory of interactionism**

The theory of interactionism assumes that language acquisition is the result of the interaction between the mental capacity of learning and the language environment. Howard Gardner (1983) describes, since birth a child has been equipped with a variety of intelligences.

## **Research Method**

This research uses methods of qualitative analysis, where data acquisition is necessary for solving problems that have been studied in full. Thus, data analysis is compulsory because the results of the research can be scientifically accountable and of course the acquisition of data quality analysis is not taken into account or the data does not require mathematical figures (Waruwu 2023, 2898). The data collection techniques used in this study are observation techniques and interviews with parents and children in person. The interview technique is between the subject and the object interacting with each other or asking answers related to the problem to be discussed. Denzin argues that an interview is a face-to-face conversation in which one party digs information on the other side (Black & Champion, 1976). (Dr.R.A.Fadhallah, S.Psi. 2020, 1). Observation technique is the observation of activity that involves the knowledge and skills of the object in order to obtain information to continue a study.

## **Result/Findings**

In accordance with the purposes of the research, namely to know the process of language acquisition and development in children, the results of the study are as follows:

### **1. Language Standards**

Language acquisition is a process that occurs in a child's brain when he or she acquires his or her mother tongue. This mother tongue is also often referred to as the first language because it is the language first acquired by a child and taught by his or her parents. This language term in English is called mother tongue. At the time of acquiring his first language, a child undergoes the process of competence and performance. When the child acquires his first language, the child undergoes the process of competence and performance. Competence is a process of grammatical mastery that takes place unconsciously. This process is a condition of the occurrence of the performance process that consists of the understanding process and the production of sentences. The process of understanding involves the ability to observe or perceive the sentences that are heard. Both of these processes, when mastered by a child, will become the child's own linguistic abilities. (Chaer, 2003: 167).

Based on the above observations, Chomsky (cited by Chaer, 2003: 169-170) says that from birth, every child has a special instrument for speaking the language called LAD. (Language Acquisition Device). This is what enables a child to acquire his mother tongue. New neuropsycholinguistic discoveries suggest that since birth a child has been equipped with parts of the brain that are specific to language called language and speech centers. Language processes occur in a complex way where the central nervous system becomes the primary control in processing language. The left side of the central nervous system is believed to be a place to produce language, speak and write. On the right side of the brain is the wernicke region and on the other side there is the supplementary motor region that functions to control the physical element of the trigger. (Simanjuntak, 1990: 194). The complicated process can be simplified by the following: language sounds are heard and understood through wernicke, then redirected to the Broca region to absorb language responses, then sent to motor areas such as speech or writing, and then produced responses in physical language, both speech, signals and writing (Etty Rohayati, 2021).

According to Ardiana and Sodik (cited by Indah Permatasari, Syahrul and Yasnur, 2019: 265-273), there are four stages of first language acquisition in children, namely:

**Table 1 Level of Language Acquisition**

| No | Level of Language Acquisition                      | Description   |
|----|--|---|
| 1  | Stage of Acquisition of Competence and Performance | Competence is the knowledge of the grammar of the mother tongue that the child unconsciously masters. Grammar consists of semantics, syntax, and phonology. In this field of competence there is a process of analysis to formulate solutions to semantic, syntactic, and fonological problems. Competence requires performance help to cope with childhood problems. Performing is a child's ability to understand (decoding) and speak (encoding). So, competence is the substance and performance is the tool that connects material with the phonology of language. |
| 2  | Semantic Acquisition Stage                         | The first structure the child acquired was semantic (meaning). Before being able to pronounce a word, the child will gather information about his or her environment. What the child understands and collects will become knowledge of his world. Understanding the meaning is the foundation of the teaching of discipline.  |
| 3  | Syntax Acquisition Stage                           | Syntax is the ability of the child to express something in the form of a sequence of sentences. the sequence begins with a series of two words that the child forms to express something. The first syntax construction of a normal child can be observed at the age of 18 months. However, some children are already starting to appear at one year of age and others are over two years of age.   |

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|   |                                |   |
|---|--------------------------------|---|
| 4 | Phonological Acquisition Stage | Phonology begins with the acquisition of basic sounds, such as vocal and consonant sounds. By the age of one year, the child begins to combine the basic sound, for example, combining vocal sounds with consonants. It's influenced by the environment, cognitive, and speech. |
|---|--------------------------------|---|

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Language acquisition in a child is influenced by several factors, including the following:

**a) Biological factors**

Each child has been equipped with an innate ability or potential that enables him to be able to speak. The biological devices that determine the child's language mastery are the brain (nervous system), hearing aids and speech aids. Chomsky and Santrock call this device LAD (Language Acquisition Devices). With this device, every child can master complex language systems, language sounds, vocabulary, grammar, semantics, and others that allow every child to speak well. In the process of speaking a child is controlled by the central nervous system that is in the brain. In the left hemisphere there is a region of the broca that affects and controls the production of language like language. Meanwhile, in the brain of the kana there are regions of the wernicke that influence and control reception or common understanding such as sensation.

**b) Social Environment Factors**

However, in order to develop his or her language skills, a child needs a social environment as an example or model of language, providing incentives and responses, and performing language exercises and tests in real contexts. The relationship between the device the child has and the growing environment is very closely linked in contributing to the child's abilities. If a child does not have one of the two, the child will lose his language ability. If one of them has a disturbance, it is almost certain that he will have a language disorder.

**c) Intelligence Factor**

Intelligence is the ability of a person to think or think, including solving a problem. Intelligence is abstract and cannot be observed directly, except through behavior. In relation to language acquisition, children with high levels of achievement tend to be faster, richer and more varied in their language skills, From a middle or low-growth child. Generally speaking well is a child with a normal intelligence, although a child who has a high intelligence which is usually measured with a good exact score has a better language ability. (Ruty J. Kapoh, 2010). If we think of howard gardner as the trigger of the spell intelligence, then we'll find a child with a better language ability than a child of his age.

**d) Motivation Factor**

On the motivation side, Benson (1988) says that motivation plays an important role in the child's first language acquisition. According to him, there are two sources of motivation in child language acquisition, instrumental and extrinsic. (Asiyah, 2014: 16). The motivation comes from inside and out of the child. In learning a language, children don't do it for the language itself. Children learn languages because they have basic practical needs, such as hunger, thirst, pain and attention and affection. This is

what is called the intrinsic motivation that comes from the child himself. Giving the motivation from the social environment means very much for the child to make him passionate about learning languages. A child raised with a high motivation to learn a language will trigger a child's language learning process. The motivators, among them, are able to respond wisely to questions and comments of the child, fine-tune the child's speech and not directly blame or reproach the child when the child speaks badly.

## **2. Steps of Language Development in Children**

Every child whose mind develops normally will learn his mother tongue in the first year. During puberty (about 12-14 years) to adulthood (approximately 18-20 years), children will continue to learn B1. After puberty, children's language skills do not advance much, although in some ways, especially in vocabulary, they learn B1 continuously throughout their lives. Acquisition B1 We consider the primary language for children because it is the most consistent language of knowledge and usage. According to Aitchison in Harras and Andika (2009:50-56), the level of language ability of the child is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2. Level of language proficiency by Atchinson**

| <b>Level of Language Development</b>               | <b>Age</b>             |
|--|------------------------|
| Crying   | Born                   |
| Drizzling (producing vocal but unclear)            | 6 weeks                |
| Meraban (producing vocals and consonants) 6 months | 6 months               |
| Intonation pattern                                 | 8 Months               |
| One-word quotation                                 | 1 years                |
| Two-word spelling                                  | 18 months              |
| Word inflection                                    | 2 years                |
| Question and denia                                 | two quarters of years. |
| A rare and complex construction                    | five years             |
| Old ripe seed                                      | Ten years              |

According to Piaget and Vygotsky (in Tarigan, 1988), the stages of language development of children are described in table 3.

**Table 3. Level of language development of children according to Piaget & Vygotsky**

| <b>Age and Stage of Language Development</b>  | <b>Description</b>   |
|---|--|
| 0,0 - 0,5 Pre-linguistic stages First   | Communicate just by looking, crying, or smiling.   |
| 0.5 - 1.0 Stage of Civilization (Pralinguistic) Second: Babbling  | Giving signals and choking by pronouncing: mu, ba, pa, ma, baba, mama  |
| 1.0 - 2.0 Linguistic Level I: Holofrastic; One word sentence  | Can pronounce a word, a speech combined with a signal, and know the turn of speech. Example: will, more hot  |
| 2.0 - 3.0 Linguistic Level II: Two-word sentences   | Can say two words, and a word of command. Examples: Mom cooked, brother drank, Dad pissed, here, there, look, this, that, again.                         |
| 3.0 - 4.0 Linguistics Level III: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Linguistic Development</li> <li>• Telegraphic Speech</li> </ul> | The vocabulary develops, distinguishes words and things, can use prefixes, alternatives, and help words, making the message pattern as short as possible |
| 4,0 - 5,0 Linguistic Level IV: Pre-Dewasa System of Languages   | ble to compose complex sentences, even if there are errors. Example: Let's ssing and sing.   |
| 5,0 - 6,0 Linguistic Level V: Full competence   | Have adequate competence. After mastering the oral language, the child is faced with the task of learning the written language.                          |

### **3. Characteristics of the Process of Language Development in Children**

Language acquisition is typically differentiated from language learning. Language acquisition refers to the cognitive processes that take place when a kid learns a second language, subsequent to acquiring their initial language skills. Nana Jumhana asserts that the process of acquiring language is connected to one's first language, but the process of learning language is associated with the second language. Yukio (2002) also explains that in the process of acquiring a second language, a learner acquires a language at the time he tries to learn it.

According to Krashen in Tussolekha (2015) for children, a second language is more learned than acquired. When examining the process and progress of acquiring a second language, two approaches are described: the differentiation and acquisition hypothesis and the language learning hypothesis. The first approach, language acquisition, is akin to how children develop skills in their native language. The second method in the acquisition of a second language involves language learning, which entails acquiring a conscious understanding of the second language, comprehending its rules, and being capable of discussing the well known grammatical principles. Some synonyms for formal understanding of a language or explicit learning are linguistic proficiency or deliberate acquisition. Some language learning theorists claim that children acquire a second language, whereas adults are only capable of learning it. However, according to the learning-acquisition hypothesis, it is expected that adults are likewise capable of acquiring language, and that this ability does not diminish after



adolescence. The above hypothesis can explain the difference between language acquisition and learning, Krashen and Terrel in Yanti (2016) affirm the differences between the two in five things seen in table 4.

**Table 4. Differences in Characteristics of Language Acquisition and Development**

| No | First Language Acquisition  | Second Language Learning                                     |
|----|---|--|
| 1  | The acquisition has the same characteristics as the first language acquisition of a native speaker's child. | learning languages is formal knowledge                       |
| 2  | The acquisition was done subconsciously.  | learning is a conscious and deliberate process               |
| 3  | The acquisition of a child or a second-language student is like taking a second language.                   | learning a second-language student to know a second language |
| 4  | the acquisition of knowledge is obtained implicitly   | learning knowledge obtained explicitly                       |
| 5  | Formal teaching doesn't help the child's abilities.   | formally teaching learning it helps a lot                    |

In this study, the researchers conducted a case study of a six-year-old boy named Rafly Adya Syarif, the son of Budi Prayitno, S.T. who professed as a private employee and Mother Yunita Chaerani who professes as a housewife. Based on the results of the observations carried out by the researchers, some information/data related to the language acquisition of a child aged 6 years was obtained as follows.

**Table 5. Interview Results**

| No | Question   | Answer   |
|----|--|--|
| 1  | Which mother tongue was first introduced and taught to a child?  | The first mother tongue introduced and taught by the child at the age of 0 months is Indonesian.   |
| 2  | Is the child already starting to learn a second language?  | The child is learning English but is still in the elementary stages.   |
| 3  | At what age do children get education in school? Did the child develop in language acquisition during that time? | The child started school at the age of three and a half, and from that age until now, six years old, the child underwent a developmental process in the acquisition of language. |

Based on the table above, the result is that the child has acquired the first language is Indonesian. Later, the language development began when the child began to be 3.5 years old

to 6 years old, which he gained from education in school. And now the kid is studying English as a second language even though it's still a basic level.

The following is an overview of the factors of environmental conditions and the involvement of parents in the process of language acquisition and development of the child, which can be seen from the following table.

**Table 6. Environmental Conditions and Parental Involvement**

| No | Question   | Answer   |
|----|--|--|
| 1  | Residence environment                                  | Comfortable and very supportive with the child's development process.  |
| 2  | Working conditions of parents                          | Smooth without constraints means.  |
| 3  | Daily communication interaction with the child         | Frequently communicate with the child and there are no limits to communication with the child.   |
| 4  | Playing activities with children                       | Playing activities with children often belong because there are no time limits.  |
| 5  | Conversation patterns                                  | Both parents often ask their children about their day-to-day activities at school, and they often tell them about the events they've been through.   |
| 6  | Language development                                   | The child's language development has begun to enter a phase of complexity characterized by the ability of the child to articulate sentence by sentence well, and can express the meaning well.   |
| 7  | Practice speaking between parents and children at home | Communication is done as often as possible and using a soft, expressive tone, whether in a mood of joy, anger, or sadness.   |
| 8  | Reading habits   | Children have become accustomed to independent reading activities because they have learned to read from school, but parents still choose books that are appropriate to their age and remain supervised.   |
| 9  | Verbal interaction when a child asks a parent          | Parents always try to answer the child's questions well. Always listen when the child speaks and teach the child the method. Parents are always used to the child from a young age to tell his daily activities to stimulate his ability to speak. And always correct when there are errors in the sentences delivered by his child. |
| 10 | Language development acquired by children              | The stimulation of storytelling that parents often do to their children promotes the development of children's language learning. Then it is supported   |

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|----|--|--|
|    |  | by additional language learning in schools, so that children's vocabulary is always increasing.  |
| 11 | The role of the environment in children's language acquisition and development | The environmental factors of the child are very influential in the process of language development. The family environment and the community environment that usually uses a good formal and informal language causes the child to master a language that is acceptable to the people around him.  |
| 12 | Child character description by parent  | That the child is a flattering and loving child, but sometimes impatient and still emotional.  |
| 13 | Parental support for children's education                                      | Parents support the full education of their children, including in the selection of extracurricular activities.  |
| 14 | The attitude of parents and children in the face of conflict                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sometimes the child is still unable to control his emotions properly when his wishes are not fulfilled or inadequate in conveying his desires.</li> <li>• Parents make rules in the household that must be observed together, including with their children, for example, bedtime should be on time.</li> </ul> |
| 15 | Approach and monitoring in the use of technology-based media                   | Making the rule that smartphone games are only one hour every Saturday and week, the viewing is only for children's special shows from either television or smartphone.  |
| 16 | Special concerns about children's language development                         | Digital literacy is more predominant, which sometimes leads to less sophisticated languages that are less worthy of children to hear. Then there was a shift in meaning from the gross meaning but now it seems like it's commonly used by people.   |

Based on the information in the table above indicates that comfortable environmental conditions and the involvement of parents greatly influence the process of language development of the child. Next, the child's language acquisition will develop gradually. This is in line with Syaprizal's (2019, 76-78) opinion that language acquisition in children is a gradual or processed language development starting at children 0-11 years of age which is complex language development. The development of this language starts from the imitation process as well as the language learning process. Based on the results of the interviews obtained data that the child obtains language development from the process of imitation of the environment and language learning both from the school and the habits and improvements of the language from his parents.

## **Conclusion**

That language acquisition is a process in which a person acquires the ability to capture, produce, and use understandable words to communicate. Language acquiring is a natural process that is complex and influenced by a variety of factors. Understanding the stages, factors, and development of language in a child is important to support their language ability optimally.

Factors that influence the child's language acquisition are:

- a. Biological factors; that every child biologically has language acquisition devices consisting of the brain, hearing aids, and speech aids;
- b. Social environmental factors; that the child needs others to transmit and receive voice signals in that language physically. Children need examples or models of language, responses or responses, thematically to practice and test language learning in real contexts;
- c. Intelligence factors: that children with a high level of learning tend to have faster, richer, and more varied language skills than children with medium or lower levels of learning;
- d. Motivation factor: that a child learns a language because of an inward impulse. A child raised with a high learning motivation will trigger the language learning process in the child.

Language development in children can be achieved through the learning process. The child's language development is acquired through several patterns such as crying, flattering, civilisation, intonation, listening to a single word, hearing two words, data inflection, questioning sentences, rare/complex constructions, and mature grading. The next level of the child's language has several levels, namely Pre-talk, First words, first names, Word combinations and spelling. The language complexity of the child is also heavily influenced by the environment, the role and supervision of the parent.

Based on the results of the interviews, data were obtained that a six-year-old child acquired language development from the process of imitation of the environment and language learning both from school as well as the habits and improvements of language from his or her parents.

## **Suggestion**

The authors hope that this article will be useful in the world of education and can serve as a source of reference for future researchers dealing with similar issues. The authors suggest that for future researchers to undertake research related to this topic, to mention the name of the original author and the title of the research as a source of reference.

## **Declaration of conflicting interest**

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in this work.

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