

## Language Acquisition of Children Age 4-5 Years Old in TK Dhinukum Zholtan Deli Serdang

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### **Abstract:**

*This study aims to determine the language acquisition of children aged 4-5 years. This research was conducted at TK Dhinukum Zholtan Medan which was conducted on March 4, 2020 with 4 students, 2 students aged 4 years and 2 students aged 5 years. In this study, researchers used the method of observation and also a questionnaire to collect data. Based on the description above, it can be concluded that children aged 5 and 4 years have different mastery. In addition to clear pronunciation, 5 year olds have mastery of more vocabulary and are able to describe things. Meanwhile, children aged 4 years have less vocabulary, have not been able to describe something and are not able to pronounce it clearly. This difference occurs because 5 year olds have already taken part in learning compared to 4 year olds. So that children aged 5 years are better able to communicate well, because they often interact with teachers and peers at school.*

### **Keywords:**

*acquisition of language; 4-5 years old; kindergarten*

## I. Introduction

Language is one of the most important things in the life of every human being. Each of them is of course inseparable from language, the first time a child gets a language that is heard directly from the father or mother when the child is born into this world. Then as time goes by and as the child grows, they will acquire a language other than the language taught by the mother and father, either in the form of a second, third, foreign language or so on which is called language acquisition where it depends on the social environment and cognitive level possessed by these children through the learning process in their environment.

Acquisition of language is a very amazing thing, especially in the process of acquiring the first language of a child without any special learning about the language from them. Like a toddler, he will only respond to utterances he often hears from the surrounding environment, especially words from his mother that the child hears very often or someone who is always with him. In line with what Chaer (2003: 167) states that language acquisition or language acquisition is a process that takes place in the child's brain when he acquires his first language or his mother tongue.

Psycholinguistics is a word formed from the word psychology and from the word linguistics, which are two different fields of science. Psycholinguistics is a branch of linguistics that combines linguistics and psychology with a focus on the use of a person's language. This was explained by the Umera-Okeke brothers. Psycholinguistics is a combined science of psychology and linguistics. This science was developed in the 60's as a response to the excitement of intellectuals at Chomsky's work. As a new science in the realm of cognitive science, psycholinguistics studies the thought and mental processes that cover understanding,

production and acquisition of language (Umera-Okeke and Umera-Okeke, 2012: 8). From the explanation of the Umera-Okeke brothers above, It can be seen that psycholinguistics has three main objects of study, namely language understanding, language production, and language acquisition. This is reinforced by what is conveyed by Dardjowidjojo (2016: 7) that the four main topics in psycholinguistics are: a) comprehension, namely mental processes that humans go through so that they can grasp what people say and understand what is meant; b) production, namely the mental processes in us that enable us to speak as we speak; c) the biological and neurological basis that enables humans to speak; and d) language acquisition, namely how children acquire their language. What Dardjowidjojo conveyed confirms that language understanding, language production, and language acquisition are included in psycholinguistic studies.

The object of study in this research is the acquisition of language so that this research is included in the psycholinguistic area. Language acquisition itself focuses on mastering one's mother tongue. Usually, language acquisition is equated with the term language learning. In theory, this was blamed by linguists, one of them Sumarlam. The term language acquisition differs from language learning in terms of mastery. As summarized in the General Linguistic Dictionary, acquisition is used in first language acquisition that occurs without R. Pandudinata, Sumarlam, & K. Saddhono, Language acquisition of children awareness to master the rules of the language naturally without being given special lessons. The term learning is used for conscious mastery of a second language (Sumarlam, 2017: 97).

In this study, the data sources were 4 children at the kindergarten level aged 4 years (2 children) and 5 years (2 children) at TK Dhinukum Zholtan Deli Serdang. Therefore, the focus of this study is language acquisition in children under five. The reason why this study focuses on language acquisition for children under five is because so far there are still many people who do not understand the development of language acquired, especially their language skills. This, indirectly affects the ability of children in language, including language acquisition. Their language acquisition is also influenced by things outside themselves, such as their family, social, and educational environment. Language acquisition in this study focuses more on acquiring basic vocabulary based on the Swadesh table. In the Swades table, 200 basic vocabulary words have been mentioned and have become references in various countries to measure acquisition of basic vocabulary words. It is hoped that this research will broaden the insight into psycholinguistics and be able to contribute to future research.

## **II. Review of Literatures**

In line with what Chaer said above, Kridalaksana stated that the definition of psycholinguistics is the study of the relationship between language and human behavior and reason; interdisciplinary science of linguistics and psychology. Jean Caron in his book, *An Introduction to Psikolinguistics*, defines psycholinguistics as "... the experimental study of the psychological processes through which a human subject acquires and implements the system of a natural language. This means that psycholinguistics is an experimental science that studies the psychological processes of how a person acquires and implements a natural linguistic system.

Psycholinguistics has a field of work regarding the language process that occurs in a person's brain, both the speaker's brain and the listener's brain. Thus psycholinguistics produces a description of the language that is processed in a person involved in communication, including how the language processing occurs, how the unit is, how the meaning it contains, and how the process of understanding the language is. In other words, psycholinguistics discusses the

language process in relation to abstract aspects, namely the linguistic system which is embodied in the symbols and rules that govern it, and the physical aspects, namely the discourse corpus produced by the speaker in certain situations. Theoretically, the main goal of psycholinguistics is to find a theory of language that is linguistically acceptable and psychologically able to explain the nature of language and its acquisition. Thus the scope of psycholinguistics is 1. The relationship between language and the brain, logic and thought; 2. Language processes in communication: perception, production, and comprehension; 3. Problems of meaning; 4. Perception of speech and cognition; 5. Language behavior patterns; 6. Acquisition of first and second languages; 7. The language process in individuals is abnormal. Acquisition of first and second languages; 7. The language process in individuals is abnormal. Acquisition of first and second languages; 7. The language process in individuals is abnormal.

## **Children's Language Acquisition Theory**

### **a. Theory of Behaviorism**

Behaviorism theory highlights linguistic behavior that can be observed directly and the relationship between stimulus (stimulus) and reaction (response). Effective language behavior is making appropriate reactions to stimuli. This reaction will become a habit if it is justified. For example, if a child says "maybe" for "maybe" the child will definitely be criticized by the mother or anyone who hears the word. If one day the child says perhaps correctly, he will not be criticized because the pronunciation is correct. It is such a situation which is called making the appropriate reaction to stimuli and is central to the acquisition of the first language.

### **b. Chomsky's Theory of Nativism**

This theory is adherents of nativism. According to him, language can only be mastered by humans, animals cannot possibly master human language. Chomsky's opinion is based on several assumptions. First, language behavior is something that is inherited (genetic), each language has the same developmental pattern (is something universal), and the environment has a small role in the process of language maturation. Second, the language can be mastered in a relatively short time. Third, the child's language environment cannot provide sufficient data for adult mastery of complex grammar. According to this school, language is something that is complex and complicated so that it is impossible to master it in a short time through "imitation".

### **c. Cognitivism Theory**

The emergence of this theory was pioneered by Jean Piaget (1954) who said that language is one of several abilities that originate from cognitive maturity.<sup>8</sup> Thus, the sequence of cognitive development determines the sequence of language development.

### **d. Interactionism Theory**

The theory of interactionism assumes that language acquisition is the result of the interaction between the mental abilities of learning and the language environment. This is evidenced by various discoveries such as those made by Howard Gardner. He said that since birth, children are equipped with various intelligences. One of the intelligences in question is language intelligence. However, what cannot be forgotten is that the environment is also a factor that affects a child's language skills.

### III. Research Methods

This research is a qualitative research because basically the data obtained are words, and not numbers. The data obtained from this study were 200 basic Swadesh words. This research strategy is a case study. The case study itself is a series of scientific activities carried out intensively, in detail and in depth about a program, event and activity, whether at the level of an individual, group of people, institution or organization to obtain in-depth knowledge of the event. Usually, the selected events, hereinafter referred to as cases, are real-life events, which are ongoing, not something that has passed (Rahardjo, 2017: 3). This research was conducted at TK Dhinukum Zholtan Medan which was conducted on March 4, 2020 with 4 students, 2 students aged 4 years and 2 students aged 5 years. In this study, researchers used the method of observation and also a questionnaire to collect data.

### IV. Results and Discussion

The results of this study are based on a total of 200 Swadesh basic vocabulary lists. There are many types of vocabulary here, from adjectives, verbs, nouns, pronouns, numeralia, adverbs, and task words. From these 200 basic Swadesh vocabularies, data acquisition of language for children aged 5 and 4 years has different levels of vocabulary.

Based on the results of the research that has been done, a 5 year old child with the initials Azura and Gusti understands more basic Swadesh vocabulary than a total of 200 basic vocabulary words and the pronunciation is perfect. Meanwhile, children aged 4 years with the initials Adit and Riko understand less basic Swadesh vocabulary and rudimentary pronunciation. The following is a list of basic vocabulary words understood by each child is shown in table 1.

**Table 1.** List of Basic Vocabulary Understood by Azura (5 Years)

Swades Vocabullary			
1. Anjing	11. Mulut	21. Dua	31. Tiga
2. Buya	12. Nama	22. Ekor	32. Ular
3. Mamak	13. Nyanyi	23. Empat	
4. Kaki	14. Putih	24. Gigi	
5. Kepala	15. Rambut	25. Hidung	
6. Kuning	16. Satu	26. Hijau	
7. Lima	17. Tau	27. Hitam	
8. Mukan	18. Burung	28. Tangan	
9. Mata	19. Datang	29. Telinga	
10. Merah	20. Dekat	30. Tidak	

**Table 2.** List of Basic Vocabulary that Gusti Understood (5 Years)

Swades Vocabullary			
1. Air	11. Jauh	21. Tau	31. Kaki
2. Bapak	12. Kepala	22. Tangan	
3. Datang	13. Kuning	23. Kuping	
4. Dua	14. Lima	24. Gak	
5. Empat	15. Lutut	25. Aku	
6. Garam	16. Merah	26. Anak	
7. Gigi	17. Nama	27. Banyak	
8. Hati	18. Nyanyi	28. Cuci	
9. Hidung	19. Putih	29. Hijau	
10. Mamak	20. Rambut	30. Hitam	

Overall, based on Tables 1 and 2. The 32 basic vocabularies that Azura mastered are vocabulary words related to family, animals, numerals, colors, and body parts. In addition, Azura was also able to pronounce it clearly and answer questions that were given quickly, such as when he planned to go to school where Azura was able to describe his plan. Like "I will not go to elementary school here miss, I will go to school there, between buya every morning, I won't go back later, Zura". Similar to Gusti, from the questions the researcher gave, he mastered 31 basic swades vocabulary which also related to family, animals, numerals, colors, and body parts. In addition to a fairly clear pronunciation, Gusti is also able to describe how to make sweet tea, Initially, the researcher only asked about the taste of food, like the taste of chili sauce? How about the taste of sugar? What is the usual salty taste? Then what do you use for tea? Until in the end he himself explained how to make sweet tea.

Based on the narrative of Kindergarten teacher Dhinukum Zholtan, with the description of mastery of basic vocabulary above, it shows that the teaching and learning approaches of the teacher have been quite successful. This is because Azura and Gusti are students who have studied in kindergarten for almost one year so that they are able to answer questions correctly and be able to describe them. Meanwhile, the basic vocabulary mastery of Swades for children aged 4 years is quite different, as shown in tables 3 and 4 below.

**Table 3.** List of Basic Vocabulary Understood by Adit (4 Years)

Swades Vocabullary		
1. <i>Apa</i>	11. <i>Ala</i>	21. <i>Gak</i>
2. <i>Bapak</i>	12. <i>Lima</i>	22. <i>Ida</i>
3. <i>Datan</i>	13. <i>Melah</i>	
4. <i>Ua</i>	14. <i>Anyi</i>	
5. <i>Digik</i>	15. <i>Uti</i>	
6. <i>Digit</i>	16. <i>Ambut</i>	
7. <i>Idung</i>	17. <i>Atu</i>	
8. <i>Itam</i>	18. <i>Tanan</i>	
9. <i>Mamak</i>	19. <i>Uping</i>	
10. <i>Kaki</i>	20. <i>Elor</i>	

**Table 4.** List of Basic Vocabulary that Riko Understood (4 Years)

Swades Vocabullary		
1. <i>Bapak</i>	11. <i>Jauh</i>	21. <i>Kuping</i>
2. <i>Datan</i>	12. <i>Atik</i>	22. <i>Gak</i>
3. <i>Dua</i>	13. <i>Kepala</i>	
4. <i>Ekor</i>	14. <i>Tuning</i>	
5. <i>Empat</i>	15. <i>Lima</i>	
6. <i>Hati</i>	16. <i>Melah</i>	
7. <i>Idung</i>	17. <i>Putih</i>	
8. <i>Idou</i>	18. <i>Lambut</i>	
9. <i>Itan</i>	19. <i>Satu</i>	
10. <i>Mama</i>	20. <i>Tanam</i>	

Overall, based on Table 3 and 4. Adit's 22 basic vocabularies are vocabulary related to family, numerals, and body members. Based on the results of the research, it was found that Adit had not mastered the names of colors and animals, besides that Adit was also not able to pronounce the vocabulary perfectly, there was still a lack of letters in the vocabulary he spoke. Similar to Riko, there are 22 basic swades vocabulary words that she uses as a whole that relates to family, colors, and body parts. Riko also has the same ability as Adit, is not able to pronounce vocabulary perfectly, there is still an inaccurate and unclear pronunciation.

Based on the narrative of Kindergarten teacher Dhinukum Zholtan, with the description of mastery of basic vocabulary above, it shows that learning and approaches have not been able to influence students. This is because Adit and Riko are students who are still 2 months of learning in kindergarten, so they are not able to describe colors and deeper questions. So that further learning is needed.

#### IV. Conclusion

Based on the description above, it can be concluded that children aged 5 and 4 years have different mastery. In addition to clear pronunciation, 5 year olds have mastery of more vocabulary and are able to describe things. Meanwhile, children aged 4 years have less vocabulary, have not been able to describe something and are not able to pronounce it clearly. This difference occurs because 5 year olds have already taken part in learning compared to 4 year olds. So that children aged 5 years are better able to communicate well, because they often interact with teachers and peers at school.

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