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## LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AT EARLY CHILDHOOD

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### Abstract

Language development is always in line with the growth of the child. Parents should always pay attention to these development, because at this time, largely determines the learning process. This can be done by giving a good example, to motivate children to learn. Parents are largely responsible for the success of children's learning and should always strive to improve the potential of children in order to develop optimally.

In view of its function, language is the ability to communicate with others. There are significant differences between the understanding of language and speech. Languages include all forms of communication, both expressed in the form of oral, written, sign language, gestures, facial expressions, pantomim or art. However, spoken language is the most effective form of communication, and the most important and widely used.

This study wants to describe how language both oral and written are developed at the early childhood. The result shows that there are several theories have challenged the development of language, such theories are nativism, cognitivism, and behaviourism. Language development is divided into three periods, namely: Period Prelingual, Early Lingual Period and Differentiation Period. Start early period this early lingual child starts to say the word - first word which is the most amazing moment for parents. The factors that affect languages development including health, intelligence, social economic condition, family relationship, family size, peer relationships and personality.

**Keywords:** *Language Development, Early Childhood*

### I. Introduction

Language is the ability to communicate with others. There are significant differences between the understanding of language and speech. Language includes all forms of communication, whether expressed orally, written, used signs, gestures, or facial expressions. While the speech is a spoken language that is the most effective form of communication and considered most important and widely used.

Language development increases through the growth of the children. Parents should always pay attention to these developments, since it will determine the learning process. This can be done by giving a good example to motivate children to learn and so forth. Parents are greatly responsible for the success of children' learning and should always strive to improve children's potential in order to develop optimally.

Language is any form of communication in which a person's thoughts and feelings symbolized in order to convey meaning to others. Furthermore, language development starts from the first cry until a child is able to speak a word.

### ***Children Language Development***

#### *Nativism*

Chomsky (1974) says that an individual is born with a tool to master the language (Language Acquisition Device/LAD) and find his own ways of working with the language. In learning the language, people have an innate ability to detect grammatical category for specific language such as phonology, syntax and semantic. The nativist argues that the language was too complex and cumbersome, making it impossible can be learned in a short time through methods, such as impersonation or imitation. This tool is a gift that has been biologically programmed to specify the items that may be of a grammar. LAD regarded as a physiological part of the brain specialized for language processing, and is not related to other cognitive abilities. Nativist believes that the ability to speak influenced by the maturity of the brain along with the growth of children. Nativist separates the language learning with cognitive development. However, it was criticized with regard to the fact that children learn the language from the environment and have the ability to change the language if the environment changes.

#### *Behaviouristic*

According to the behaviourists, ability to speak and understand the language of children obtained through stimulation from the environment. Children as passive recipients of environmental pressures, have no active role in the process of development of verbal behaviour. The behaviourist not only does not recognize the active role of the child in the language acquisition process, but also does not recognize the maturity of the child. The process of language development is mainly determined by the length of training provided by the environment. The actual ability to communicate is with the principle of linkage S-R (Stimulus - Response) and a process of imitation.

Behaviourists found children born without bringing any ability. Thus the child must learn through conditioning of the environment, the process of imitation, and given reinforcement. An expert looked at the development of language from the point of stimulus-response, which saw thinking as an internal process of language begin to accrue from interactions in the environment. The other one looked at the development of language from the point of social learning theory. Other argued that children learn by doing, imitations or simulate a model that meant not having received a reinforcement from others.

### *Cognitivism*

According to Jean Piaget, thought as a prerequisite to speak, continues to grow progressively and occur at every stage of development as a result of the experience and reasoning. Children's development in general and at early language is closely related to a variety of children's activities, attractions and events they experience; and touch, hear, see, feel, and smell.

Vygotsky argued that the children's cognitive development and language is closely related to the culture and the communities in which children live. Vygotsky used the term Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD = Zone of Proximal Development) for tasks that are difficult to be understood by children. ZPD has a lower limit for the level of the problem being solved by children themselves and a higher threshold for the level of extra responsibility can be accepted children with the help of adults.

### *Early Childhood*

Early childhood is a child in the age of 0-6 years (UUSPN No.20 / 2003, Article 28, paragraph 1). At the age of 0-2 years of physical and brain growth is done through 'yandu' (pelayanan terpadu) from the Ministry of Health, Depsosial, BKKBN and the Ministry of Education. In the early childhood program, the Ministry of Education is expected to be the "Leading Sector".

At the age of 2-4 years children are in TPA or Play Group. At the age of 4-6 years is done through kindergarten (TK A and B). Early childhood education (PAUD) is an effort that is intended to provide educational stimuli to assist the

growth and development of children physically and mentally in order to have the readiness to enter further education.

## **II. Discussion**

### ***Language Development Period***

Language development of children is divided in three periods, as follows:

#### *Prelingual Period (age 0-1 years)*

At this period children cannot pronounce 'spoken language' as spoken of adults, in the sense of not following the rules of the applicable language. In this period the child has a language of its own, such as babbling instead of communication with others. For example baba, mama, tata, which may be a reaction to a particular situation or a particular person as a symbol for the beginning of a mental process maturity at the age of 9-10 months.

#### *Early Lingual Period (1 to 3 years)*

In this period, children began to speak the first words, though not yet complete. For example: akit (sakit), agi (lagi), itut (ikut), atoh (jatuh). At this time some combination of letters is still difficult to say, and few letters still difficult to pronounce like r, s, k, j, and t. The proficiency improvement is quickly developed and can be divided into three periods, namely:

a. One word sentence period

According to the rules of grammar, sentence of one word is not a sentence, because it consists of only one word, but experts of language development of children thought that the first words spoken by children can mean more than just a 'word' for the word is an expression of complex ideas, which in the adult is expressed in complete sentences. For example: the words "mother" can mean: Mom here! Mom where? Mother, help me! That is mother's dress, Mother I am hungry, and so on.

b. Two words sentence period

Generally, the second sentence appears when children begin to understand a theme and try to express it. This happened at about the age of 18 months,

where the child determines that the combination of these two words have a certain relationship that has different meanings, for example, the meaning of belonging (mommy dress), and adjective (blue crayon), so on.

c. More than two words sentence period

The period of sentence of more than two words shows the ability of children in the field of morphology. Skills form the sentence increased. It can be seen from the length of the sentence, the sentence of three words, four words, and so on. In this period the use of language is no longer egocentric, but the child had used for communication with others, so they started a real relationship between children and adults.

*Differentiation Period (3 – 6 years)*

In this period children's skills in organizing the differentiation of words and sentences are more appropriate. Broadly, the general characteristics of language development in this period are as follows:

- a. Phonological development may be said to have ended. There may still be difficulty in pronouncing pluralistic and complex consonants.
- b. Vocabulary gradually began to grow. Nouns and verbs are more differentiated in its use, it is characterized by the use of prepositions, pronouns and auxiliary verbs.
- c. Language for communication functions properly - really starts to work. Children want to share their perception and experience of the outside world to other people, by providing feedback, ask, order, tell and others.
- d. Start the development of morphology, characterized by the emergence of a plural word, change the suffix, change verbs, and others.

***Factors Affecting Language Development***

*Health*

Healthy children learn faster than children who do not speak well, because motivation is stronger for being member of social groups and communicate with others. If the first two years of age, children experience constant pain, children consider experience slowness or difficulty in the development of their discussion.

### *Intelligence*

Children who has high intelligence to learn, speak more quickly and demonstrate mastery of the language than children who's in low level of intelligence.

### *Social-Economic of the Family*

Several studies on the relationship between language development and family's social status show that children who come from poor families lacks in language development than children from richer families. This condition is probably caused by learning differences or opportunities (poor families allegedly less attention) to second child language development – or both.

### *Family Relations*

Healthy relationships between parents and children will be an opportunity for the development of children's language, whereas an unhealthy relationship will result in the children to experience difficulties or delays in language development.

### *Family Size*

Single child or children from small families usually speak earlier and better than children from large families. Because parents can set aside more time to teach their children to speak.

### *Relationships with Peers*

The more the children's relationship with their peers, the more they want to be accepted as a peer group member, and the more powerful their motivation to learn to speak.

### *Personality*

Children who can adapt well tended to have better speaking ability, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

## *Stages in Language Learning (English)*

English teaching is done in stages. Similarly, learning Indonesian children do not directly speak, read and write simultaneously. Before they could speak Bahasa they should listen first. If they never hear it they will have difficulty in speaking. That's why deaf children usually also automatically mute because they could not hear, so they cannot imitate. In conclusion, in the essence of learning any language is the same. Here are the stages of learning English for children:

### *Listening*

In addition to hear us talking, children can also be heard from the way of a story book was read in English, chanting simple or watch a DVD or a video in English. But for the beginning, as educators we must choose words are few and simple.

### *Speaking*

Once the child is often heard in English, children can be encouraged to speak in simple sentences. For example, by applying time of 30 minutes a day for a family to speak in English. Like the newly age children start talking, children also start talking in English although with one word like 'book' when they saw their brother brings a book. Then develop into short sentences like, 'he brings book'.

### *Reading*

There are two common methods in teaching children to learn to read in English that is the whole language approach and phonic.

- a. **The whole language approach** is a method of learning to read by making the language as one inseparable unity. Reading should also be in accordance with the context. This method is more emphasis on the meaning of a word. For example, when seeing the word "cat" children immediately told that it read "ket" and it means the cat. Normally children learn to read by the system of remember (memorize) words that have been mentioned. The advantages of this method is makes children faster to read but will have difficulty when it came to writing the long words.

- b. **Phonic** is a method of learning to read through the letters with how to spell one by one, say "cat" means spelled "keh-e-tea" and read "ket". Each word is broken down into letters. Because children learn through a spell then requires a longer time to be read. But excess easier when children have to write down the words they heard. To facilitate children's learning and reading, we as educators should choose books appropriate to their level. For example, children who are just starting to read, as educators we choose books that consist of only one word; suppose the first page there is a picture of apples and underneath the words "This is Apple". After that could be tried with other words, suppose "I like banana". Children can create their own books like it or get it through reading A to Z.

### *Writing*

This is the most difficult stages of learning English, because there are many rules that must be obeyed. Most of Indonesian people would have difficulty in speaking English. Actually it is not because they cannot, but because of fear of being wrong. Yet even though we mispronounce the formation of several sentences or one-word language interlocutors we certainly understand. But that's not writing, when we do a lot of grammatical errors and spelling, other people who read could do not understand what we write. Writing is relatively difficult, that is why it is placed as the final stage. As educators we should not rush to teach grammar or writing what if the child has not mastered the three previous stages.

Teaching children grammar should be done implicitly through the book that contains sentences that have same pattern. Suppose if the first page contains the sentence of past tense, next few pages also past tense patterned. So after a few repetitions children can get an idea of the sentence when it used the past tense. However, if children are taught grammar explicitly that with a lengthy explanation about the past tense complete with formulas to be memorized, then the child will be confused and end up afraid to write.



### ***Language Learning Method For Early Childhood (English)***

Various methods can be used for learning English at early childhood, among others:

#### *TPR Method (Total Physical Response Method)*

This method was developed by James Asher, a professor of psychology at California State University of San Jose. This method is the appropriate method to teach English at an early age where children prefer learning activity directly related to physical activity and movement. In this method, Asher said that more frequent or more intense stimulation of memory, a person is given the stronger the memory associations connected and easier to remember (recalling). Memorizing is done verbally with the motion activity (motor activity).

#### *Long term memory Method*

Unlike the method of instilling the perception that English as a life skill and knowledge, these methods give priority to long-term memory in students or learners. It is usually applied to the teaching of English to young children. There are several ways teaching English to young children with the concept of long-term memory to be achieved, namely:

- a. Full patience in teaching early childhood.
- b. Focus on inputs not only output.
- c. Teach children as much vocabulary as they can easily find in their surrounding.
- d. Use the media as supporting children's learning.
- e. Involve children to train their skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
- f. Everyday phrase in English is very effective in practicing their skills.
- g. Repeat each sentence so that they can remember in a long time.
- h. Do not forget to give them a reward for achievement and enthusiasm in learning.

### *Teaching English by Using Song*

Not just singing, but singing with music will help children's learning process. Music can enrich spiritual life and provide a balance of life in children. Through music, people can express their thoughts and feelings of their heart and can control the emotional aspect.

### *Teaching English by Using Games*

Learning English using games as media has advantages as follows:

- a. Submission of materials can be homogenized
- b. The learning process is more interesting
- c. The children's learning process more interactive
- d. The time of teaching and learning can be reduced
- e. The quality of children's learning can be improved
- f. The process of learning can happen anywhere and anytime
- g. A positive attitude of children towards learning materials as well as to the learning process itself improves
- h. The educators' role can be changed to a more positive and productive

### *Teaching English by Using Stories*

Learning English can also be done by reading a short story. By reading sentence to sentence, it will be easy to understand and greatly help our children understand the English story.

Steps in learning English with storytelling as follows:

- a. Prepare media, teaching tools and if necessary an educator must memorize the story.
- b. Create a fun atmosphere, which is convenient and makes children curious about the stories we read.
- c. Before telling a story, make an appointment with a child with the words "Do not ask before teacher completed the story. If anyone wants to ask, postponed".
- d. Read stories with passion and as attractive as possible.
- e. Once finished reading the story ask the children to repeat what you tell them.

- f. Questions are wellcome.

### **III. Conclusion**

Every human initiate communication with the surrounding through the language of tears. In line with the development of physical ability and maturity primarily concerned with the process of talking, the communication has increased and expanded. Judging from its function, language is the ability to communicate with others. A study of children's language development must not be separated from the view, the hypothesis, or theory embraced psychology. On this subject there are several theories challenged the development of language, such theories have nativism, behaviourism and cognitivism. Language development divided into three periods, namely: Prelingual period, early Lingual Period and Differentiation Period. Starting these early lingual period children begin to utter the word - the first word that is the most amazing moment for parents.

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