

THE ANALYSIS OF UTTERANCES PRODUCED BY 3 AND 4 YEARS OLD CHILDREN

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan tahap ujaran dan jenis kalimat mood yang dihasilkan oleh anak usia 3 dan 4 tahun. Subjek penelitian ini adalah 6 orang anak usia 3 dan 4 tahun. Data dikumpulkan dengan menggunakan metode rekam dan wawancara. Temuan penelitian ini yaitu usia 3 tahun ditemukan bahwa perkebangan bahasanya berada ditahap I (MLU:1,62), II (MLU2,28), IV (MLU: 3,14). Sementara usia 4 tahun berada pada tahap IV untuk semua subjek dengan MLU yang bervariasi 3,02, 3,28, dan 3,4. Ditemukan juga bahwa beberapa anak tersebut sudah mampu menggunakan pernyataan dalam semua jenis kalimat mood dan beberapa belum mampu, ujaran yang mereka hasilkan didominasi oleh modus deklaratif. Ini diakibatkan beberapa faktor seperti coginitif, latar belakang sosial, bawaan lahir.

Kata Kunci: *language acquisition, utterances, MLU, sentence mood*

A, Introduction

Language is one of media to express what human being felt, to communicate and to interact with other people. However, people are not born with full of words, mastering grammatical order and other linguistic components. They must acquire them from their parents, social life, association and environment. This process is called language acquisition. Language acquisition is a complex process which has developmental stages that must be followed by an acquirer in order to have good language knowledge. Lenneberg in Herschensohn (2007:16) states that there is a critical period for language developmental between the ages of two and twelve. He believes that maturation of brain is one the factor in developing first language acquisition.

According to Hoff (2005), the acquisition of phonology or sound system is started from vowel like coining at 6 to 8 weeks of age, followed by some

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consonant sounds, and the last followed by babbling. Hoff believes in early 5 months to teen months of age, children typically produce their first word. In addition around 18 months, children can achieve 50-words. Around the age of 18 months to 2 years, children begin to combine word. Steinberg (2001) said the combination of words in ages of 18 months to 2 years is called holophrastic utterances. Children's two word combinations are followed by utterances that are three and more words long, and children's utterances get longer. In these ages children's first sentences tend to be simple active declarative, negative sentence and question and lacking many of the word function. Steinberg (2001) called telegraphic utterances. By the time children are 4 years old, they can produce complex sentence and this ages may be said children have mastered the grammar of their language.

Those things that make many researchers wonder how humans being acquire a language. One of the experts that wonder about this phenomenon is Chomsky who believes humans being are completed by language acquisition device or LAD which encode the major principle of language and its grammatical structure to children's brain. The other is Skinner who states that language acquisition is heavily influenced by behaviorism, reinforcement, imitation association (Fromkin et al (2007:314). The last is Lenneberg (Herschensohn, 2007; 16) claims that there is a critical period of language development between the ages of two and twelve. These experts seem to contradict in viewing of mechanism of language acquisition or language development.

Brown (1973) mentioned there are 5 stages language of development. He showed it by measuring the length of children utterances; he called it Mean Length of Utterance (MLU). He identified that: Stage I (1.0-2.0; 12-26 month) It means that in the ages of 12 until 26 month, children are in the stage I which have ability to produce one until two words. At this stage children's utterances is called holophrase utterances because one word is indicate to one sentence. Stage II (2.0-2.5; 27-30 month) It means that in stages II are the period in the ages of 27 until 30 month which include 2 until 2 half word. Most of their grammatical morphemes merge and they have been able to elaborate NP in object position. According to Brown stage II refers to the morphological development. The child starts to change word endings to portray grammar. Stage III (2.5-3.0; 31-34 months) It means that in stage III children are only able to produce the average of 2.5 until 3. In this stages are the period of sentences development. In the ages 31 until 34 month, children have had ability to elaborate NP in subject an object position and have had vocabulary about 1200 word. Stage IV (3.0-3.75; 35-40 months) Stage V (3.75-4.5; 41-46 months) In this stage children are able to produce 3.75 until 4.5 word in one utterance. They also can produce pronoun such as its, our, their, theirs, myself, your self; moreover, conjunction word such as and, or, but appear; they also understand superlative and comparative, primitive tag question. And their vocabulary are wider become 1900 words. The child may use connectors and more functions.

An utterance is a single piece of speech marked off as a unit in some way, for example by pauses and intonation. The utterances like "what's for dinner?" But everytime you say what for dinner?, you are producing a different utterance. It

may be faster, slower, louder or softer; one may be cheerful or eager. Moreover, an utterance corresponds to the same English sentence Mika: where's Susie? Sarah: in the library. The mike's utterance corresponds to an English sentence, but Sarah's respons does not. Sarah cases are just like the term utterance.

Talking about the development of children language, MLU or Meant Length of Utterances is the one of way to measure that development. Based on the expert of this theory, Brown, who discover the correspondents a child's MLU to their ages (http://www.csun.edu/~vcoao0el/de361/de361s61_folder/tsld016.htm). He stated that in the approximate of 12-26 moths, child's MLU in stage I or about 1,0-2,0; 27-30 months in stage II or 2,0-2,5; 31-34 months in stage III (2,5-,3,0); 35-40 months in stage IV (3,0-3,75); 41-47 months in stage V (3,75-4,5); 47+ months in stage V+ (4,5+). However, the researcher assumes that even though they have the same ages, it does not mean they have the same MLU. It is caused many factors such as cognitive, social factor, innateness, intelegence, etc that each of children has is different. So, it is possible that they have the same MLU. However, the researcher assumes that even though they have the same ages, it does not mean they have the same MLU. It is caused many factors such as cognitive, social factor, innateness, intelegence, etc that each of children has is different. So, it is possible that they have the same MLU.

After you have counted all the morphemes, you are already to calculate the MLU. The traditional method of calculating MLU is dividing the number of morphemes by the number of utterances.

$$\frac{\text{Number of morphemes/words}}{\text{Total number of utterances}} = \text{MLU}$$

For example:

$$\frac{150 \text{ morphemes}}{\text{MLU 50 utterances}} = 3.0$$

Sentence mood is the kinds of sentence that are produced by speaker to tell or to express what they mean or want. When a speaker wants to tell information to others, it refers to declarative mood, when a speaker wants to ask something, it refers to interrogative mood, when a speaker wants someone to do something, it refers to imperative mood, and when a speaker wants to express his/her emotion such as amazed, astonished, shock, anger, sad, disappointed, upset, annoyed.

This case also occurs on children especially 3 and 4 years old children. However, even though they have the same ages such in ages 3 or 4, it does not mean they have the same ability in producing sentence in mood variety to express their feeling, ideas. Probably in a field, it can be found that not all 3 years old children when they are surprised by others utter such as "I am shock", others may just express by "laughing, crying" without saying any words. It is same to 4 years old children. In other words, some children in 3 years old may be able to produce such mood interjection and others moods, but others may not.

Therefore, researcher is really challenged in conducting this research which about the analysis of utterances produced by 3 and 4 years old children for some reasons. Firstly, researcher wants to know how far as the ability of 3 and 4 years old children in acquiring their first language. This idea is basically gained from the lenneberg's opinion which states that biological maturation such ages is the factor of language development. From the lenneberg's opinion above that every child who has the same ages have the same ability in acquiring and producing his or her first language. However, researcher assumes that the ability in acquiring language of each child such as in ages 3 and 4 years old is different. Some aspects that differentiate them are experiences, cognitive, maturation of vocal tract, doing interaction and maturation of brain.

Based on the explanation above, the purposes of this research are identify the stages of 3 years old children's utterances by using MLU, to identify the stages of 4 years old children's utterances by using MLU, to identify the kinds of 3 years old children's sentence based on the sentence mood, to identify the kinds of 4 years old children's sentence based on the sentence mood.

B. Research Method

This research was conducted by using descriptive research. This design was the appropriate one because the problem empirically exists in society. In addition, this research tried to describe and analyze the utterances that 2 and 3 years old produced.

Some experts had various definitions about this term. Mashall, et al (1995:41) stated that the data of descriptive method was collected through participant, observation, in-depth, interview, document analysis, unobtrusive measure and survey question. In addition Key (1997) said that descriptive research was used to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomenon to describe what exist with respect the variable or conduction in a situation.

The data of this research was the first language which were produced by 3 and 4 years children who was left by their parents for while when they were going to work at PAUD Bhakti Husada.

By having a good knowledge related to theory of this research, the researcher was the main instrument of this research. As a human instrument, researcher had a duty to select the participant of this research, to collect data, to analyze data, and make conclusion. The researcher was helped by hand phone N70 to record the all the activity of the children and the researcher was also involved as the interviewer. Technique of collecting the data was participative observation. Therefore, the researcher was involved in all the children's activity in their daily life.

C. Discussion

After researcher collected the data, researcher found that the first language of those children is Indonesian language even though they use Minangkabau dialect and sometimes they used particular minangkabau lexicon such as "do,a" in utterance.

In addition, for each 3 years old child, researcher initialed A₁ for Cia, A₂ for Aurel, and A₃ for Siddiq. Then, for the 4 years old children, the researcher initialed B₁ for Madina, B₂ for Nabila and B₃ for Safsaiq. After researcher followed the procedure in determining of MLU, researcher found even though they have the same age, they have different MLU and stages. For example, for those children who are 3 years old, A₁ has MLU 1,62 or the child are in stage I, while A₂ has MLU 3,14 or she is in stage IV and A₃ has MLU 2,28 or he is stage II. It also occurred for 4 years old children. However, even though they have different MLU; they are still in the same stage. Researcher found that the MLU for B₁ is 3,2, and B₂ is 3,3 and for B₃ is 3,4; those MLU belong to the stage IV.

In expressing children's ideas or feeling, they use various ways. Some children express their ideas or feeling by uttering something and others do not. In the field, researcher found that each 3 years old child had been able to produce statement in various sentence moods. Based on the data, however, the researcher found that those 3 and 4 years old children still produced statement in declarative moods dominantly. A₁ and A₂ had been able to produce statement in all kinds of sentence moods such as declarative, imperative, interrogative, and interjective. In contrast, A₃ did not yet; the subject's statement was absent in interjective mood. It was similar to 4 years old children. Two of them B₁ and B₃ had been able to produce statement in all kinds of sentence mood, but B₂ did not yet.

From the all subject, it was found that even though they are in the same ages; they have different in such kinds of language ability. It is shown from their length of utterances and their ability in producing statement in kinds of sentence mood.

Table I: The Stages of the 3 years old children's utterances

The 3 years old children	F/M	Ages (months)	MLU	Stages
A ₁	F	37 m	1,62	I
A ₂	F	39 m	3,14	IV
A ₃	M	40 m	2,28	III

Based on the table above, it shows that even though their ages are same, the stages of their language development are different. A₁ is in stage I (MLU: 1,62), A₂ is in stage IV (MLU: 3,14), and A₃ is in stage III (MLU: 2,28).

Table II The Stages of the 4 years old children's utterances

The 4 years old children	F/M	Ages (month)	MLU	Stages
B ₁	F	50 m	3,02	IV
B ₂	F	51 m	3,28	IV
B ₃	M	53 m	3,4	IV

It is unsimilarity to the stages of 3 years old children's utterances, for those 3 children who 4 yaers old had the same stages; they are in stages IV with different MLU. B₁ had MLU 3,02, B₂ had MLU 3,28, and B₃ had MLU 3,4.

The two table above show the differences of lenght of utterances between 3 and 4 years old children. Their differences are not too far except the subject A₁

and A₃. One of 3 years old children A₂ and all 4 years old children are in stage IV. It means that their MLU are approximately 3,0-3,75. However, only one person from the all participant, 3 and 4 years old children, who are evaluabe to the Brown's formulation about the relation between ages and MLU; she is the subject A₂ whose MLU 3,14 in ages 39 months.

Related to the children's knowledge about producing statement in such kinds of sentence moods is also different. Some of 3 years old children have been able to produce statement in all kinds of sentence mood, some have not. It also occurred on 4 years old children.

Table III: The Kind of Sentence Mood Produced By 3 Years Old Children

Subject	The Frequence sentence mood			
	Declarative	Imperative	Interrogative	Interjective
A ₁	86%	10%	4%	4%
A ₂	84%	8%	4%	4%
A ₃	84%	12%	4%	0%

The table above shows the frequency of the kind of sentence mood that 3 years old children have. It shows that most of the children's statements are dominated by declarative mood. From 50 times A₁'s the statement, it was found 86% for Declarative, 10% times for imperative, 4% for interrogative, and 4% for interjective; A₂ produce statement 84% for declarative, 8% for imperative, 4% for interrogative, and 4% for interjective; and A₃ 84% for declarative, 12% for imperative, 4% for interrogative, and 0% times for interjective.

Table IV: The Kind of Sentence Mood Produced By 4 Years Old Children

Subject	Frequency utterances in using sentence mood			
	Declarative	Imperative	Interrogative	Interjective
B ₁	74%	8%	14%	4%
B ₂	90%	2%	8%	0%
B ₃	54%	14%	30%	2%

It is similarity to 3 yaers old children, the sentence that 4 yaers old children produce were dominated by declarative mood. From 50 times B₁'s the statement, it was found 74% for Declarative, 8% for imperative, 14% for interrogative, and 4% for interjective; B₂ 90% for declarative, 2% for imperative, 8% for interrogative, and 0% times for interjective; and B₃ 54% for declarative, 14% for imperative, 30% for interrogative, and 2% for interjective.

The two tables above are the frequency of sentence mood that 3 and 4 years old children produce. Some of 3 and 4 years old children had been able to produce statement and all kinds of sentence mood, and some of had not. A₃ is the one of children 3 years old who was not able to produce statement in interjective mood and the other is the subject B₃ from the group 4 years old children. Moreover, it was found that all subjects produced statement declarative mood dominantly.

From the research, it was found that not all children in the same ages had the same stage and MLU. For example, the subject 3 years old children had different stages on each children. Like the subject A₁ had MLU 1,62 (stage I). This case was not evaluabe to the Brown formulation about the relation of ages and MLU which suppose to reach MLU 3,0-3,75 (stage IV). Of course it is caused many factors. Based on the information that researcher found from the A₁'s parents that A₁ started to talk when she was in 2 years old. And it began to develop one year recently. Probably that case that made the subject A₂ and A₃ are more develop than A₁. This thing proves that each of children has different intelligence and also cognitive in acquiring their first language.

Moreover, A₂ has the highest MLU among the others. The subject was evaluabe to the Brown's formulation which stated that the approximate 35-40 moths belongs to the stage IV which has MLU about 3,0-3,75. From the data, it was found that the subject A₂ has a good ability in acquiring her first language. In the field, researcher watched that she has many friends, she has a good interaction with others, and she was also aggressive and active. In addition, the subject expresses directly what she wants, her feeling, and her ideas by utterance. This case proves the child had good both of language competence and performance.

The subject A₃ had the same case with the A₁, but it is not as extreme as A₁. A₃ is also not evaluabe to the Brown's formulation. His utterances was only able to reach MLU about 2,28. In the field, researcher watched that he is not as aggressive as A₂. To express what his feeling, he used to use his body movement without saying any word. And he started to talk when someone talk to him. However, when he uttered something, he was able to utter more than three utterances. This case prove actually the child has good language competence but less in language performance.

It also occurs for 4 years old children. Even though they had different MLU, they were still in stage IV. However, they were not evaluabe to the Brown's formulation. Related to their ages approximately 48+ months supposed to reach MLU 4,5+ (stage V+). In the field, the researcher watched those subjects all of them were active in playing or interact with others. From the data it was found that they had been able to produce 3 and more utterances.

The result that the researcher found in the field is contradicted with the Brown's formulation about the relation between ages and MLU. 3 years old children are supposed to be in stage IV and 4 years old are supposed to be in stage V+. However, this formulation did not occur on children in PAUD Bhakti Husada. This case shows that they did not have good language knowledge yet.

In addition, related to the each child's abilty in producing statement in such kinds of sentence mood in order to express or to communicate their feeling or ideas is different. Some of the 3 and 4 years old had been able to produce statement and question in various sentence moods, but some of them had not yet. Even though some of the 3 and 4 years old children utter one word to express their mean, people who are close on them will understand what they mean. Such as when A₁ uttered "*minum*" (drink), it indicateed "give me drink" or "I want drink, can you give me drink", or etc. Indeed, the statement *minum* means that she asked someone to give her drink. In another word she had been able to produce

statement in imperative mood. All of the 3 and 4 years old children had been able to produce statement in declarative, imperative, and interrogative. However, one of 3 and 4 years old children were absent in interjective mood. And also based on the data, it was found that all of the 3 and 4 years old children's statement are dominated by declarative mood. Those problem were caused by their verbal ability are still minim.

Actually there are many factors that influence the acquisition or development of first language. Some of them are inneateness, social background, cognitive, intelligence, environment and etc. From the children's data that the researcher got from the PAUD that all the children's parents are educated people. However, their parents do not spent much time to interact with their children. They left their children about 9 hours a day. And the children just spent their time with their friend and their nanny. Related to this the researcher found that except they have good environments which give them a chance to interact with many people, and they have educated parents, the interaction between parents and children is also really needed. This case is caused 0-4 is the period when a child acquire their first language from their parents especially their mother. Thus, first language acquisition usually called mother tounge.

In addition, from the data the researcher found that some of 3 and 4 years old children in PAUD Bhakti Husada did not have good cognitive yet. It was proved from their ability in expressing their ideas or feeling. Some of them were absent in interjective mood which in expressing their emotion. However, some of them have good cognitive. It shows when they did not know something, they asked, when they feel funny they laugh, etc.

Moreover, from the utterances that all children produce, it was found that they did not have good Language Acquisition Device (LAD) yet. It was shown from their statement. They did not have good grammatical order yet and good pronounce yet.

And the last is intelegece. From the data, it was found that only one child, A₁ who did not good intelegece in her first language acquisition. Most of her utterances were hard to understand. Only particular people will understand them like her parents or her nanny and may be some of her friends. From example when the researcher ask said "*abang tu lagi main kartu*" (That brothers is playing card) then she said *ka'tu* (*card*). If other did not pay full attention to what she said, they will not understand anymore for what she said. Based on the information that the researcher got from her parents that she could speak and uttered one word uncompletely when she was in 2 years old and it develop one year recently.

D. Conclusions and Suggestions

Based on the result that the researcher found at PAUD Bhakti Husada exactly the TPA about the stages of utteraces and the kins of sentence mood that even though they are in the same ages, they have different ability in acquiring their first language. It is proved from their MLU and their kinds of sentence mood that they produce.

The Mean Length of Utterances (MLU) for those 3 years old childrens are 1, 62 (stage I) for A₁, 3,14 (stage IV) for A₂, 2,28 (stage II) for A₃. The stages of

the children A₁, and A₃ are not evaluabe to the Brown's formulation which is supposed to be in stage IV. However, it does not occur for A₃ which is evaluabe to the Brown's formulation

In addition, the Mean Length of Utterances (MLU) for those 4 years old children are 3,02 for B₁, 3,28 for B₂, and 3,4 for B₃. Based on the Brown's formulation those MLU belong to the stage IV. However, the stages all of them are not evaluabe to Brown's formulation which is supposed to be in stage V+.

Moreover, their ability in producing statement in such kind of sentences mood is various even though their ages is the same. Some children have been able to produce statement in all kinds of sentences mood, some have not. For those 3 years old children one of them A₃ had not been able to produce statement in all kinds of sentence mood, declarative, imperative, intrerrogative, and interjaction. This subject was absent in interjactive mood. It is also occur for those 4 years old children. Only two of them B₁ and B₃ are able to produce statement in all kinds of sentence mood. The other, B₂ has not which is absent in interjactive mood.

Based on the result above, it shown that ages can not be as a main factor mechanisim in acquiring first language, but many others factor such as cognitive, social factor, innateness, intelegence, and etc.

This research is conducted in order to investigate in what stages the utterances of 3 and 4 years old children by determining their MLU; in order to identify their ability in producing statement in kinds of sentence mood. There are many topics that can be conducted by other researcher in analyzing the children's first language especially for 3 and 4 years old children. Therefore, researcher suggests that others researcher can continue this topic or can be as a relevan study so that it can develop a better knowledge about the utterances of children's language.

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