

Language Acquisition Approach and Theory

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Abstract

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This study aims to present differences of children's abilities in acquiring language. This study uses a qualitative method by collecting sources from various journal articles and books. The object of the study is experiences that prove several theories related to language acquisition. This journal describes several language acquisition approaches which are reinforced by theories from an expert as well as examples of language acquisition experienced by the author.

Keywords: Language Acquisition, Children, Experience

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INTRODUCTION

Language is the main means of communication used by everyone in everyday life. As for communication through language can be formed by communication verbally, in writing as well as symbols and gestures. In general, language is universal and can be used by anyone, it's just that the difference lies in every part of the country that has their own language. As one of the main means of communication, language has an important role as the identity of a person or a country. Every country must have a different language to communicate, for example like in an Arab country, they communicate using Arabic there. Likewise in Indonesia, where people communicate using Indonesian as the national language and use traditional languages according to the regions spread across Indonesia.

The things that are done to acquire this language have actually happened when humans were babies. To acquire language requires internal and external processes faced by babies or children in acquiring a language. The language that is acquired for the first time by children can also be referred to as their mother tongue or first language. According to Ruhenda (2013), mother tongue as an instrument for language acquisition can support several aspects of development in children such as language, cognitive, and emotional development. From this mother tongue a child not only gets his first language but also several important aspects to support child development such as cognitive and mental development.

This journal will discuss approaches to language acquisition that are strengthened by leading theories in psycholinguistic studies. Acquisition is a process of mastering something, while language is a means of communicating. Literally language acquisition is a process of mastering a first language (native language). The language acquired here is intended only for the acquisition of the first language, while acquiring the second, third and so on is called language



learning. According to Huda (1987:1), language acquisition is a natural process in a person mastering the language. Language acquisition is usually obtained as a result of verbal contact with native speakers of that language environment. Thus, the term language acquisition refers to unconscious mastery of language and is not affected by language teaching about the system of rules in the language being studied.

In this case, language acquisition and language learning are two different things, so that the process has different stages as well. The stage for acquiring a first language or mother tongue begins when humans are 0 months old until they really master the first language. Meanwhile, the acquisition of language learning which becomes a second language when the child is ready for learning until an age that cannot be determined. This journal will only discuss the approaches used in the language acquisition process based on the theory put forward by experts.

METHOD

The research method used to compile this journal is a qualitative method by collecting sources from various journal articles and books that contain information about the object of discussion in this journal. according to Creswell (2012), qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning of individuals or groups ascribed to a social human problem. The process of research involves emerging questions and procedures; collecting data in the participant settings; inductively analyzing the data, building from particulars to general themes; and making interpretations of the meaning of data. The final written report has a flexible writing structure. Here the author also conducts interviews with informants to obtain information about the experiences I had when I was a baby. The experience used as an example of the approach and theory used in this journal is a personal experience experienced by the author with the help of interviews from family or parents.

DISCUSSION

Language acquisition is the initial process experienced since infancy to get their first language. Sayekti (2001) in a scientific journal entitled Language Acquisition in Toddlers examines the process of learning the first language in toddlers. This process takes place effectively at the age of under five years (toddlers). This process gradually continues to follow the development of age and experience. The potential for language learning in children under five is high, so that potential needs to be optimized, considering that language acquisition greatly influences other mastery processes when children enter school age. So, the language acquisition process is very effective considering that the ages of infants to toddlers have thoughts that are still pure and easy to grasp what is provided by their parents or their environment.

There are two processes that can be applied when a person begins to learn his first language, namely the ability process and the performance process. These two processes are different from each other. competence is the result of automatically acquiring knowledge of grammar. Although it is true that every child is born with all of this competence, it still requires coaching in order for children to express themselves properly. Performance is the child's ability to communicate using

language. The processes of understanding and forming sentences make up the two process that makes up performance. The ability to analyze and understand the sentences heard is needed for comprehension. If these two types of competency processes have been mastered by the child, they will become the child's linguistic ability (Chaer 2009: 167).

There are several theories that state how language acquisition by children can occur. In the seventh century BC, it is said that the king of Egypt, Psammetichus I wanted to know the language that came out of his children by isolating it. In 1877 Charles Darwin recorded his son's language development with diary entries. These theories suggest how language acquisition can occur in children. This approach to language acquisition has its own theorists who are the main points of this journal.

RESULT

1. NATIVISM

According to nativism, children (humans) gradually unlock their linguistic potential as they acquire their first language in accordance with their genetic programming. This hypothesis, which is related to the "nature gift theory," argues that language is a biological gift and also that the environment has no influence on how children acquire up any new languages.

According to nativism, when a person knows his or her first language at a young age, their genetically preconfigured linguistic abilities eventually become exposed. Chomsky has modified his theories on language learning and helped to develop a new TPB model that is based on logic, the TPB Nativist LAD. Children will improve their linguistic skills progressively and in stages where they become more abstract. Only humans possess this tool, which is a component of the human brain's physiology that serves as a language processor; as a result, only humans are creatures that can communicate.

EXPERIENCE

The evidence for this hypothesis comes from my personal experience as a toddler, when learning my first language was not influenced by my upbringing but rather by genetics and the Language Acquisition Device, a tool Comsky had stated (LAD). For instance, when I pronounced the word "mama" for the first time, it wasn't something my parents had explicitly taught me; rather, LAD, which has been genetically programmed in my brain so that it may acquire that language, caused the language to occur.

2. BEHAVIORISM

Behavior is a person's attitude or attitude in daily life that later develops into a habit. Various factors, including education level, parental influences, culture, and environmental factors, might affect behavior. The environment around us has a significant influence on all human behavior. Human personality is shaped by the environment. Basically, interactions between humans and their environment lead to behavior, and this pattern of interaction has to be evident to others. The father of behavior theory, John B. Watson (1878–1958), stated that his research focused on the relationship between stimulus and response in the environment and on characteristics of language behavior that can be felt directly. This theory states that all behavior, including responses, is a result of stimulus (stimuli).

Although he believes that changes that cannot be seen, such mental developments, are important, they do not, in his perspective, explain whether or not the learning process has taken place. The stimulus and reaction (S-R) must, therefore, be observable. What changes will take place in children can be predicted based on this supposition.

EXPERIENCE

My experience with this theory is that when I was just born, my parents agreed to change their nicknames to "ayah and mama". This happened when they were talking alone or talking in front of me. Why is that? because my parents wanted to provide a stimulus or encouragement so that in the future it would be a response to me calling them that name which eventually became a habit until now. I began to be able to pronounce the word at the age of 6 months.

3. COGNITIVISM

Cognitive is the stages of change that occur in the span of human life to understand, process information, solve problems and know something. The process of human cognitive development has been going on since he was born, and the utilization of the capacity of the human cognitive domain has started since utilizing his sensors and motors. One of the well-known theorists in this cognitivism approach is Jean Piaget who believes that cognitive development occurs in four stages. Each stage is related to age and is composed of different ways of thinking. The stages of cognitive development are the sensorymotor stage (age 0-2 years), the pre-operational stage (age 2-7 years), the concrete operational stage (age 7-11 years) and the formal operational stage (age 11-15 years).

a. Sensorimotor (age 0-2 years)

In this stage, infants construct an understanding of the world by coordinating their sensory experiences (seeing, hearing) with motor movements (reaching, touching). At the beginning of this stage, babies show nothing more than reflective patterns for adapting to the world. A key development during the sensorimotor stage is the understanding that there are objects and events that occur in the world naturally from one's own actions.

EXPERIENCE

The experience I experienced at this stage was that at the age of 10 months I was starting to be able to determine the toys I wanted to play, and at the age of 11 months I had started to get my first word, namely "mama" by listening to what my parents taught me every day. . At the end of this stage I have also started to be able to ask new things by asking "what is that?".

2. Pre-operational Stage (age 2-7 years)

This stage is a more symbolic thinking stage, but does not involve operational thinking. This stage is more egocentric and intuitive. In this sub-stage, young children begin to mentally represent objects that are not present. This expands the child's mental world to include new dimensions. The development of language that begins to develop and the emergence of playful attitudes are examples of increased symbolic function thinking.

EXPERIENCE

My experience, which was told by my parents at the beginning of this stage, was that I had started to recognize some colors, could count numbers 1-10 and drew abstract things that I wanted to mention, for example, I said I wanted to draw a cat, but all I drew were lines abstract lines. Pronunciation in speaking in the middle of this stage is also getting smoother and I have mastered a lot of vocabulary. My parents also often teach me some nursery rhymes which helps me in acquiring a language with more vocabulary with songs.

3. Concrete Operational (age 7-11 years)

Concrete operations are mental actions that can be reversed relating to real concrete objects. Concrete operations allow children to coordinate several characteristics, so they don't just focus on one quality object. At the concrete operational level, children can mentally do things they could only do physically before, and they can reverse these concrete operations. What is important in the ability of the concrete operational stage is classifying or dividing something into different subs and understanding the relationships. The child begins to show conservation abilities (amount, area, volume, orientation). Although children can solve problems in a logical way, they are not yet able to think abstractly or hypothetically.

EXPERIENCE

Experience at this stage, I was able to learn school subjects such as mathematics and was able to acquire other languages such as English which I learned in elementary school.

4. Formal Operational (age 11-15 years)

At this stage the individual has started to think about concrete experiences, and think about them in a more abstract, idealistic and logical way. The abstract quality of formal operational thinking is evident in verbal problem solving. In addition to having the ability to abstract, formal operational thinkers also have the ability to idealize and imagine possibilities. At this stage, children begin to speculate about the ideal qualities they would like in themselves and in others. The formal operational concept also states that children can develop deductive hypotheses about how to solve problems and reach conclusions systematically. A teenager can perform mathematical calculations, think creatively, use abstract reasoning, and imagine the results of certain actions.

EXPERIENCE

My experience at this stage in acquiring a first language is increasing and I really master the first language even complete with slang or trending languages. At this stage I also began to deepen my studies of a second language, namely English, even at this stage with my own awareness I began to be interested in other languages such as Arabic, Korean, Tagalog and Mandarin.

CONCLUSION

Every child has different abilities in acquiring language. Language acquisition is not determined by at what age a child must start acquiring language

and until when a child must stop acquiring his first language. This journal describes several language acquisition approaches which are reinforced by theories from an expert as well as examples of language acquisition experienced by the author. 1) Nativism is the view that certain skills or abilities are natural or have been embedded in the brain since birth. Meanwhile, Chomsky also revealed that there is a Language Acquisition Device (LAD) to acquire language. 2) Behaviorism is a change in behavior as a result of the interaction between stimulus and response. Wtson also revealed that in order to shape behavior, a stimulus and response is needed that helps children acquire language. 3. Cognitivism is a learning process through interaction between individuals and their environment by involving thinking/reasoning processes. Piaget in his theory said that there are 4 stages in cognitive processes based on the age of the child, namely the sensory-motor stage (age 0-2 years), the pre-operational stage (age 2-7 years), the concrete operational stage (age 7-11 years) and the formal operational stage (age 11-15 years).

In acquiring language in children, it is not only the child's ability to capture what is learned that is important. But the role of parents in providing stimuli to children is also important to get a good response from children. Apart from that, the environment also influences the process, because where the child lives will definitely curse whatever is around him, so parents must also protect the environment so that in the future the child can have good character.

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