



Language Acquisition in Early Childhood: Exploring Sentence Structures in a Child Raised by a Working Mother

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Abstract*

Language acquisition is a process of absorption and mastery of language that occurs naturally in children. During the developmental period of language acquisition, children require beneficial stimulation to optimally develop their language skills. Typically, this stimulation comes from parents, who are their closest caregivers. This research focuses on language acquisition in a 3-year-old child cared for by working mothers. It aims to identify and describe the types of sentence structures acquired and mastered by the child, as well as the factors influencing the child's first language acquisition, particularly in relation to parenting styles from a working mother's perspective. The study employs a qualitative-descriptive method. The subject of the study is a female child aged 3 years and 6 months. The data required includes primary data obtained from observations and secondary data collected from interviews with individuals living in the child's family environment and among neighbors. The results show that the research subject, Claudia (a pseudonym), who is 3 years and 6 months old, has mastered four types of sentence structures: declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory. Although the structures of these sentence modes are not perfect, Claudia's performance in producing them at her age is quite commendable. The observations and interviews reveal three main factors contributing to her speaking skills: social and family environmental factors, cognitive intelligence, and motivational factors.

1. Introduction

A child's language ability begins from within the womb. The tabula rasa theory, which states that a child is born into the world like a blank, clean sheet of paper, is not entirely accurate. A child is already equipped with a Language Acquisition Device (LAD), a natural mechanism in the child's brain that absorbs the sounds of the surrounding language. The process of absorbing and producing the sounds of a child's language is called language acquisition. Language acquisition is the process of naturally absorbing and mastering language that occurs within a child. Chear (2003:167) states that language acquisition happens within the child's brain, where the child acquires language naturally from their mother or the closest person in their early life.

Language acquisition differs from language teaching, as it occurs naturally without a formal setting, whereas language teaching is a conscious process, involving pre-arranged learning.



According to Henry Guntur Tarigan (2009: 243), language acquisition is the process of a child uttering words they have previously heard, stored in their brain, and later spoken in a communicative process. On the other hand, language learning, according to Laughlin in Elizabeth (in Pramuki and Sukini 2014:11), is the process of mastering a second language using a cognitive approach. A child wishing to learn a new language must actively and diligently engage. The child must express their thoughts, ideas, and demonstrate language skills individually or collectively, while comparing and observing the linguistic phenomena being learned with the aspects of the first language they have already mastered. In second language learning, a language teacher plays a crucial role in motivating the child to stay focused on language learning.

In the theory of language development proposed by Yulianti (2002:87), there are several stages in a child's language development. The first is the pre-lingual stage, occurring between 0 and 12 months. During this stage, the child produces sounds that resemble cooing and babbling. In the cooing stage, the child produces vowel sounds (a, u, o) and bilabial consonants—sounds produced by the contact between the upper and lower lips (m, b, p). The next stage is the lingual stage, typically occurring between 1 to 2.5 years. During this period, the child is capable of producing words with four or more syllables.

The pre-lingual stage consists of three phases: the holophrastic phase, the telegraphic phase, and the multi-word phase. In the holophrastic phase, the child can articulate a single word with multiple meanings. The telegraphic phase is where the child can produce two words to convey a meaning or purpose, while in the multi-word phase, the child can express more than two words to convey more complex meanings.

The final stage of language development is the differentiation stage, occurring between 2.5 to 5 years. At this point, the child can form complete sentences using their mother tongue, though not perfectly. During this stage, the child can express their own perceptions, ideas, suggestions, and other linguistic aspects. Despite notable progress in morphology and syntax (word formation and grammar), children often still make phonological errors (pronunciation and articulation).

Based on the stages of language acquisition outlined above, it can be concluded that a child undergoing language acquisition requires stimulation to optimize their potential development (Soetjiningsih, 2003: 29-31, 62-70). A child who regularly receives stimulation will advance rapidly in their language development. Therefore, the role of parents is crucial in supporting a child's first language acquisition. Parents must spend time engaging with their children and provide verbal stimulation. They must also implement appropriate parenting strategies to encourage their child to speak and express their feelings and desires using the vocabulary they have acquired.

Research by Anggraini (2015: 54) shows that parenting styles in the family provide positive energy for the child's language development. A democratic parenting style will maximize a child's early language acquisition abilities. Thus, it can be said that one of the main factors influencing a child's language ability is the family environment, where the mother plays a primary role in contributing significantly to the child's growth and development.

The role of the mother is especially important in the cognitive development of the child, including their speech development. This is why, across the world, the first language a child learns is referred to as the "mother tongue." Silberg (2004: 111) asserts that a family environment rich in daily communication and conversation provides fertile ground for the growth of vocabulary that a child can absorb into their brain. Conversely, a family environment lacking in communication and



conversation is not conducive to the child's language development. Parents should provide dynamic stimulation to their toddlers, such as talking, singing, and storytelling.

The greatest challenge to a child's first language acquisition often comes from their own family, particularly their parents. If both parents work and do not spend enough time with the child, the child's speaking abilities may be limited. This is evident in Kupang, the capital of East Nusa Tenggara (ENT), where many working mothers, employed in both government and private sectors, work 8 to 12 hours a day. These working mothers have limited time to care for their children. Therefore, there is a common assumption that working mothers cannot maximize the care for their children due to the limited time spent interacting with them, which could negatively affect the children's first language acquisition.

Based on this phenomenon, this study aims to explore the first language acquisition of a 3-year-old child named Claudia (a pseudonym), residing in Kelurahan Naimata, RT. 40/RW 10, Kupang City. Claudia is a girl born on June 4, 2020. Her mother works as an employee of a provincial government bank in ENT, while her father works at a private bank. Claudia spends her days with two nannies, interacts with her 6-year-old brother, plays with neighborhood friends, and spends time with her cousins. The objective of this study is to identify and describe the types of sentences Claudia has acquired and mastered, as well as to identify and describe the factors influencing her first language acquisition, particularly stemming from the parenting environment of a working mother.

Next, several similar studies that serve as references for this research will be presented. The first study is by Fathonah (2019) on "Language Acquisition of 3-4 Year Old Children in Dusun XII, Celawan Village, Pantai Cermin Subdistrict, Serdang Bedagai Regency: A Psycholinguistic Study." From the results of this study, it can be concluded that in terms of phonology, Malay language acquisition in children aged 3-4 years includes the pronunciation of the consonant [s] being pronounced as the consonant [c], the shift of the consonant [f] to the consonant [p], the omission of the consonant [h] at the beginning of words, and the shift of the vowel [o] to the vowel [e]. On the syntactic level, the researcher found that children generally can produce grammatically correct sentences. On the semantic level, children can already use denotative meanings, or the literal meanings of words.

The difference between this previous research and the current study is that Fathonah's research focused on language acquisition in children aged 3-4 years in terms of phonology, syntax, and semantics using a psycholinguistic approach. However, the current study examines language acquisition in children in Kupang City, focusing specifically on the syntactic level or sentence structures mastered by 3-year-old children. Furthermore, the current study uses a case study method to analyze the language acquisition of a 3-year-old child in Kupang City.

The second reference study is by Rohmawati (2016) on "Syntactic Structures in First Language Acquisition (A Case Study)." Based on her research, it was found that in syntactic structures, language acquisition in a 20-month-old child includes the two-word stage, and by the age of 21 months, the child can already say three words. The forms of utterances mastered include declarative, imperative, and interrogative sentences. The child also uses pronouns (this, that), locative deixis (here, there), adjectives (long, big, tasty, beautiful), and adverbs (also, already) in their speech.

The similarity between these two studies lies in the selection of the research topic, which analyzes first language acquisition in children using a case study method. This method aims to investigate and examine a linguistic phenomenon occurring in a child. The difference lies in the



number of subjects studied. The previous research involved more than one subject, while the current research focuses on one subject with a more specific case: the child being raised by working parents during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The third study is by Tiyas (2019) on "Language Acquisition of 1-2 Year Old Children from Low Economic Background Families." This research aims to describe the stages of vocabulary acquisition or syllables acquired by 1-2 year old children from low economic background families. This study used a qualitative descriptive method with two main techniques: (1) the identification stage and (2) the descriptive stage. The findings revealed that (1) the child's first words included 20 utterances such as *ana, mbok, jacan, eni, tayok, utak, mbak, atut, emoh, pin, bombom, uka, awah, ndah, atoh, duduk, pipis, atik, ayam, ayi*. Meanwhile, in the (1) one-word sentence stage, only two utterances were recorded: *ta eni* and *ayah anan*.

The similarity between these two studies is the focus on early childhood language acquisition. The difference lies in the background of the research subjects. The previous study focused on children from low economic background families, while the current study examines children from middle to upper economic backgrounds. Additionally, the theoretical approach differs: the previous study used morphological analysis, while the current study employs syntactic analysis.

The novelty of this study lies in the unique focus on language acquisition in 3-year-old children in Kupang City, specifically children raised by working parents, particularly a working mother. This research provides a new perspective on the relationship between the parenting style of working parents, especially mothers, and first language acquisition in children, a topic that has not been extensively discussed in the local context of Kupang.

Unlike previous studies, which mostly examined language acquisition from phonological or morphological perspectives, or based on families with low economic backgrounds, this study highlights language acquisition from a syntactic perspective in children of working parents. It also emphasizes the role of parenting and verbal stimulation in families where parents work outside the home, facing time constraints in interacting with their children.

In addition, this research takes a case study of a child in an urban environment, Kupang, where the influence of the social environment and the dynamics of working parents' lives affect the child's language development. Thus, this study makes an important contribution to the field of language acquisition in the context of modern urban families, particularly in families with working mothers. This topic is relevant to a society increasingly adapting to changes in work patterns and child-rearing practices.

2. Research Method

In this research, the researcher used a qualitative descriptive method. According to Moleong (2010:17), qualitative research aims to understand phenomena experienced by research subjects, such as behavior, perceptions, motivations, actions, and so on, holistically, and described in the form of words and language, within a specific natural context and utilizing various natural methods. The descriptive method is considered by the researcher as a method capable of accurately portraying the personal state of an individual, the language used by that individual, and the phenomena occurring both individually or classically. The research location is in Kelurahan Naimata RT/40 RW/10, Kupang City, East Nusa Tenggara.

The research subject is a 3-year-6-month-old girl. The selection of the research subject is based on the phenomenon where the child, despite being only 3 years old, is highly proficient in



communicating using Kupang Malay. Kupang Malay is the first language acquired by the child. The types of data required in this research include primary data, which is obtained from observations, and secondary data, which is obtained from interviews with all parties living in the child's family environment and the neighborhood. In this research, the researcher, as the key instrument, directly and accurately observed the child who is the research subject. A 3-year-6-month-old child is in the transition period from prelinguistic to the stage of one-word and one-phrase utterances, leading to sentence formation. T

The researcher used the "*simak libat cakap*" technique or listening and speaking involvement technique, where the researcher observes the speech patterns spoken by the subject, then engages in the speech act by providing stimuli or prompts in the form of questions or responses that encourage the child to speak. The follow-up technique used by the researcher is the "*simak bebas libat cakap*" technique, where the researcher only acts as an observer and does not directly engage in the speech events between the child and her family or caregivers.

Subsequently, the researcher recorded all the conversations that occurred. In data analysis, the researcher used three steps: reducing the data by transcribing the recorded data into written form, identifying and classifying the written data, and interpreting the classified data. The final stage is presenting the data in the form of explanations and drawing conclusions.

3. Results and Discussion

1. Acquisition of Sentence Modes in a 3-Year-Old Child

In this study, the subject is a 3-year-6-month-old child. The child spends most of her daily time with two caregivers. The first caregiver is a 19-year-old teenager who completed elementary school, while the second caregiver is a diploma student currently studying at the State Polytechnic of Agriculture in Kupang. Claudia spends much of her time with her two caregivers, her 6-year-old brother, and her cousin, who often visits her. Although her interaction with peers of the same age is limited due to their residence being in a housing area where there are not many children her age, Claudia has already begun producing several sentence modes in the Kupang Malay language.

In her daily life, her parents and caregivers use Kupang Malay. The following discussion covers the language acquisition of a 3-year-6-month-old child raised in a family environment where the mother works outside the home. The discussion on language acquisition is based on syntactic analysis, specifically examining the sentence modes that Claudia has mastered. According to Chear (2009:137), the classification of sentences based on their mode is determined by the content, message, and intent the speaker wants to convey to the listener. Therefore, sentence modes are divided into four categories: declarative, interrogative, imperative, and interjective. Based on observations and interviews with the research subject, Claudia has acquired and produced all four sentence modes as follows:

a. Declarative Sentence Mode

A declarative sentence is structured to deliver a statement or information without requiring a specific response from the listener (Tarigan in Astuti, 2016). Ramlan, as cited in Astuti (2016), further elaborates that the function of a declarative sentence is to convey a message or information that does not demand a significant reaction from the listener. The response given is usually limited to paying full attention as the information is presented, reflected in serious eye contact that indicates attentiveness when the speaker delivers the message in the form of a declarative sentence.



Based on the expert definitions of declarative sentences, the subject of this study has acquired declarative sentences and has been able to produce declarative sentences in her daily conversations with her caregivers. Below is an excerpt from a conversation involving the subject, Claudia (pseudonym), a 3-year-old child:

Conversation (1)

Claudia: (1) *ade suka pakai baju Bobo Boy atau Elsa* (do you like wearing clothes with Bobo Boy or Elsa characters?)

Claudia: (2) *Elsa sa suka elsa sa, elsa rambut panjang, elsa baju baru, mama beli baju elsa* (I just like wearing Elsa, because Elsa has long hair, and mama bought the Elsa outfit.)

Caregiver:(3) *Kenapa ade suka pakai baju elsa?* (why do you like wearing the Elsa outfit?).

Claudia: (4) *Elsa badus, gaga, mama beli baju elsa di Lippo* (Elsa's clothes are nice and cool, mama bought the Elsa outfit at Lippo).

Caregiver: (5) *Jangan baju Elsa sudah kotor belum dicuci, pake yang lain sa.* (don't wear the Elsa outfit; it's dirty and hasn't been washed. Just wear another one).

Claudia: (6) *onde mau, mau baju Elsa sa, cuci do baju elsa sekarang elsa sa.* (I don't want to, I just want the Elsa outfit, wash it now!).

Caregiver: (7) *iya nanti kaka cuci baju elsa* (yes, kakak will wash the Elsa outfit later).

Claudia: (8) *Cuci sekarang su! Cuci dimana beta cuci e?* (wash it now! Where can I wash it? I want to wash the Elsa outfit).

Caregiver: (9) *Biar sudah kaka yang cuci sa adik main sa.* (let kakak wash it, you just go and play).

The conversation above took place at Claudia's home and involved her caregiver and Claudia herself. The caregiver asked Claudia about her preference for the shirt she wanted to wear, offering two options: a cartoon Bobo Boy shirt and a cartoon Elsa shirt. From the conversation (1), it is evident that Claudia was able to express her choice by selecting the Elsa shirt over the other option.

Not only was Claudia able to make her choice, but she also provided a reason in the form of a declarative sentence. The declarative sentence in conversation (1) is found in the following statement: (2) *Elsa sa, beta suka elsa sa, elsa nona manis rambut panjang, elsa baju baru, mama beli baju elsa* (I like wearing the Elsa shirt because Elsa is a pretty girl with long hair, and my mom bought me the Elsa shirt).

In sentence (2), Claudia explains the reason behind her choice, declaring or providing additional information to her caregiver that Elsa, the character on her chosen shirt, is a beautiful girl with long hair. Not only does Claudia describe the image on her chosen shirt, but she also adds that it is a new shirt bought by her mother.

The second declarative sentence in conversation (1) can be seen in sentence (4), where Claudia responds to her caregiver's question with another declarative sentence: (4) *Elsa badus, gaga, mama beli baju elsa di Lippo* (Elsa's shirt is nice and cool, my mom bought the Elsa shirt at Lippo).

In sentence (4), Claudia successfully answers her caregiver's question about why she likes the Elsa shirt by providing information that the shirt is nice and cool when she wears it. Claudia further adds in her declarative sentence that the shirt was purchased by her mother at Lippo Plaza,



a shopping center in Kupang. From sentence (4), it is clear that Claudia can use adjectives to describe things; the adjectives used in this sentence are *nice* and *cool*.

b. Interrogative Sentence Mode

According to Chear (2009:189), an interrogative sentence is one that expects a verbal response. This response can be in the form of acknowledgment, explanation, reason, or opinion from the listener or reader.

Conversation (2)

Claudia's Father: (10) *Ade ini apa?* (what is this, dear?)

Claudia: (11) *Ha pe* (cell phone).

Claudia's Father: (12) *HP ini untuk apa* (what is this cell phone for?)

Claudia: (13) *tepon mama to halo, halo, halo* (the phone is for calling mama).

Claudia's Father: (14) *Ayo ketong telpon kakak Aro* (let's call kakak Aro).

Claudia: (15) *Awo, awo, Halo Awo, buat apa, Awo su am, Awo am apa?* (Aro, Aro, hello Aro, what are you doing? Have you eaten? What did you eat?).

Claudia's Father: (16) *Ade suru kakak Aro datang main di sini!* (ask kakak Aro to come and play here!).

Claudia: (17) *Awo main sini, Awo datang su, main oto. Awo ada oto baru?* (Aro, come play here! Come now to play with cars. Do you have a new car?).

The second conversation took place at Claudia's house where there were two interlocutors: Claudia's father and Claudia herself. From the conversation above, it is evident that Claudia is already able to explain the uses of objects around her. She can respond to her father's question about the function of the *HP* (hand phone or cell phone). Claudia answers that the function of the cell phone is for making calls by responding that the phone is for "Halo, halo," meaning for calling. Despite her limited vocabulary, she is able to provide an accurate answer.

Furthermore, the subject is also capable of initiating a conversation with others (as seen in the conversation with one of her cousins above), where she asks what her cousin is doing and whether he has eaten yet. The subject is also able to respond to her father's request, where he asks Claudia to invite her cousin to come play at their house. Claudia responds by inviting her cousin to play. Moreover, the subject is already able to express a farewell to her interlocutor.

The interrogative sentences that Claudia has mastered in conversation (2) can be seen in sentence (15), *Awo, awo, Halo Awo, buat apa, Awo su am, Awo am apa?* In this sentence, Claudia has already used an interrogative sentence in *Bahasa Melayu Kupang*. Sentence (15) is a question, where Claudia asks, "What are you doing, Aro? Have you eaten? What did you eat?" From this sentence, it seems that Claudia has already mastered interrogative sentences to inquire about what her interlocutor is doing and what they have eaten.

Imperative Sentences

According to Chear (2009:197), an imperative sentence is a sentence that requires the reader or listener to perform an action by asking them to do what the speaker or writer commands or prohibits. An example of an imperative sentence mastered by Claudia in Kupang Malay can be found in conversation (1) sentence (6) below: (6) *onde mau, mau baju Elsa sa, cuci do baju elsa sekarang elsa sekarang* (don't want just the Elsa shirt, wash Elsa's shirt now!).



Based on the data in conversation (1) sentence (6), it is clear that Claudia has been able to use a request-based imperative sentence properly, as Claudia asks her caregiver to wash her clothes during the speech event. The above data is classified as a request imperative sentence because it contains the element of a request expression: *cuci do baju elsa sekarang elsa sa*. The sentence is in Kupang Malay, with the addition of the particle *do*, which implies a plea or a request for help.

The sentence indicates that Claudia wants her Elsa-character shirt washed immediately by her caregiver because it is dirty and she cannot wear it; hence, she adds the particle *do*, which in Kupang Malay expresses a request for assistance to perform an action.

Another imperative sentence can also be found in conversation (2), sentence (17): *Awo main sini, Awo datang su, main oto. Awo ada oto baru*, (Aro come here, Aro come now, let's play with cars. Aro, do you have a new toy car). In sentence (17), Claudia has been able to use an imperative sentence in the form of a command to ask her cousin to visit her house so they can play together. It is clear from this sentence that Claudia is not only asking her conversation partner to come to her house but also providing additional information in a declarative sentence that she has a new toy car.

Interjection Sentences

An interjective sentence, according to Chear (2009:200), is a type of sentence where the speaker expresses emotions, for example, when the speaker is amazed by something, they use expressions such as *wah, wow, aduh, ha, nah, alangkah*, etc. Interjective sentences are also used to express positive emotions such as feelings of happiness, amazement, delight, or joy. Additionally, interjective sentences can express negative emotions like sadness, dislike, frustration, disappointment, and anger. They can also express neutral emotions, such as surprise, astonishment, or shock. Below is an example of a conversation between Claudia and her mother, in which interjective sentences mastered by Claudia appear.

Conversation (3)

Ibu Claudia: (18) *Ade mau am nasi, ayo mama kasih am ade?* (do you want to eat rice, dear? Come, Mama will feed you).

Claudia: (19) *am nasi, ia am nasi* (Eat rice, yes eat rice).

Ibu Claudia: (20) *Ade mau makan nasi deng ikan ato daging ayam?* (do you want to eat rice with fish or chicken?).

Claudia: (21) *Ayam sa, ayam wiiii enaaaa* (just chicken, chicken is so delicious!).

Ibu Claudia: (22) *mama kas ade ikan sa ya ko adik pintar?* (Mama will give you fish so you'll be smart, okay?).

Claudia: (23) *onde mau, ikan onde ena, iiii mau ayam* (no, I don't want fish, fish is not tasty, I want chicken).



Factors Influencing Language Acquisition in 3-Year-Old Children in the Context of Working Mothers' Parenting Styles:

a. Social and Family Environmental Factors

Social and family environmental factors play a crucial role in supporting the developmental stages of language acquisition in children. The essence of language development is based on cognitive abilities, environmental influences, and the learning process, which together enrich their vocabulary. This statement is supported by Sukmadinata (2019), who asserts that the aspects influencing a child's development include the environment, such as culture, social factors (parenting styles), and the spiritual beliefs of the family.

Stage III (Grammar Development) occurs between the ages of 3 and 4 years, during which children can articulate more than two words and experience differentiation. Their vocabulary expands, enabling them to distinguish between verbs, pronouns, and auxiliary verbs. Additionally, the function of language for communication becomes fully operational, allowing them to engage in dialogues that can be understood by others. Based on observations, the research subject, Claudia, has demonstrated the ability to communicate using various sentence structures.

This ability is attributed to her parents, who frequently communicate in Kupang Malay, the child's first language. Although Claudia's parents work outside the home, they effectively utilize their free time to engage with her. They often play and converse with their children, activities that serve as stimuli for Claudia's conversational skills. Furthermore, she is cared for by a caregiver who is quite communicative and frequently encourages her to engage in conversation.

From interviews with Claudia's mother, it was found that to stimulate her children's communication development, she implements several strategies, including: 1) frequently asking questions that encourage her child to provide contextual responses; 2) teaching her child to sing children's songs to enhance vocabulary; 3) watching age-appropriate TV shows and films, followed by asking simple questions about the content or characters to gauge her child's comprehension; 4) encouraging her child to socialize with relatives; and 5) both of Claudia's parents often read stories or fairy tales to her. Although Claudia cannot yet read and does not fully understand the tales in the storybooks, observations indicate that she enjoys storybooks, particularly those with illustrations. Claudia and her older sibling have a collection of illustrated storybooks.

b. Intelligence Factors

Intelligence factors relate to a child's cognitive abilities or capacity for thinking. According to Kapoh (2010:89), there is a connection between intelligence and the assessment of language development (vocabulary, articulation ability, and indications of language maturity). Intelligence is abstract and cannot be observed directly. At 3 years and 6 months, Claudia exhibits a quick grasp of language.

In this research, Claudia is able to produce four sentence modes: declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory, within syntactical frameworks. Her creativity is notably high; she can provide accurate and appropriate responses when asked questions by her conversational partners. Claudia can also express her desires and refusals in a manner that is easily



understood by others. Thus, it can be concluded that Claudia possesses a good level of intelligence, as evidenced by her ability to produce a variety of sentence structures.

b. Motivational Factors

A child who has strong motivation to speak with the people around them, especially with their peers, will be successful in acquiring language skills. Hurlock (2008) states that motivation is the greatest force within a child for successfully mastering a new language. A child learns a language to express their basic needs; for example, when the child is hungry, thirsty, cold, hot, in pain, etc., they will push themselves to express these feelings using the first language they have acquired from their immediate environment.

The main source of motivation within a child is intrinsic motivation. From the results of observation, the first language that Claudia acquired was *Bahasa Melayu Kupang*. *Bahasa Melayu Kupang* is the language used by her parents, caregivers, siblings, and her friends. When playing with her cousins and friends in her home environment, Claudia would try to speak to her cousins using *Bahasa Melayu Kupang*.

Based on interviews with her parents, it was found that initially, Claudia was not fluent in speaking, but she received continuous stimulation while interacting and playing with her parents, siblings, caregiver, and cousins. Unconsciously, she acquired, recorded, and produced new words while communicating with her speaking partners.

4. Novelties

Compered to earlier research on early childhood language acquisition, this study yielded a number of new findings. These are the study's novelties.

1. This research concerning language acquisition in children, specifically focusing on sentence structures among 3-year-olds raised by working mothers, reveals several noteworthy aspects regarding their ability to process imperative, interrogative, declarative, and interjection sentences. Additionally, this study examines interjections as a linguistic element recognized by three-year-olds, adding new insights to the body of literature on language acquisition. Interjections, which express emotions, have seldom been explored by other researchers in the realm of children's first language acquisition, making the successful processing of these elements by study participants a significant contribution to the field.

2. A key finding of this research is the impact of parental caregiving styles on children's language development, particularly how the parenting approaches of working mothers influence their children's language acquisition. The study demonstrates that a mother's hectic schedule does not significantly hinder language acquisition at this developmental stage. In fact, it shows that a mother who does not constantly attend to her child still offers meaningful stimulation for language growth. This research encourages an examination of how environments characterized by limited direct communication between children and working or non-working mothers affect children's language skills. Moreover, it concludes that it is not the amount of time spent with children that shapes their language development, but rather the quality of interactions they have. Therefore, these findings can lead to innovative recommendations for early childhood education policies, focusing on programs designed to enhance children's language abilities within family environments where mothers are employed, thus facilitating optimal language development in early childhood.



3. The research identifies various language forms processed by children under the age of five. It revealed that three-year-old children can comprehend and use multiple sentence structures, including imperative, interrogative, declarative, and interjection sentences. These findings indicate that at such a young age, children are not only able to grasp one type of sentence but can also generate diverse sentence forms. Consequently, these results contribute to the existing research on children's first language acquisition, an area that has not received extensive attention from scholars previously.

4. This research further corroborates Anggraini's (2015) findings that link the social environment to children's language acquisition, showing that interactions within various social contexts, such as those with caregivers, family, and peers, have an impact on language skills, even when mothers are employed. The study illustrates that despite maternal employment, children can still experience complex language development.

6. Another significant finding of this study is the relationship between access to technology and vocabulary growth in children. In the context of working mothers, the study subjects engage more frequently with media and technology for both entertainment and educational purposes. As a result, this research highlights the role of digital media in enhancing children's language acquisition, particularly in their comprehension of different sentence structures.

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6. Conclusion

Based on the results of the research, it can be concluded that the subject of the study, Claudia (not her real name), who is 3 years and 6 months old, has mastered four sentence modes, namely declarative, interrogative, imperative, and interjective sentence modes. Although the structure of these four sentence modes is not yet perfect, for a child who is only 3 years and 6 months old, the subject's performance in producing these four sentence modes is quite good.

This is due to the role of both of the subject's parents, especially the role of Claudia's mother, who pays great attention to her child's physical and non-physical development, including her speech ability, which represents her intellectual ability. Several strategies applied by Claudia's parents, particularly her mother, include motivating her to speak, stimulating her to express opinions by always asking questions, always making time to chat and interact with the child, and several other activities that have been elaborated on in the research results. Thus, based on observation and interviews, there are three main factors underlying the subject's speech development: social and family environment, intelligence, and motivation factors.

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