VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT IN CHILDREN AGE 18 – 24 MONTHS

Resy Oktadela
Language Education Program, Islamic University of Riau, PekanBaru, Indonesia
E-mail: resyokta@gmail.com

DOI: https://doi.org/10.22202/tus.2017.v3i2.2626

Abstract
This paper aims at describing the first language acquired by the children in age 18 - 24 months. This period can be said as at the beginning point when children starting to produce words in their life. The data were taken from a baby 19 months' years old, named Elpon, he lives in Trivana Regency, PekanBaru Province. The method is by using diary to note the vocabularies have been acquired.

Keywords: ***Children, the first language acquired, using diary to note***

INTRODUCTION

Language is the systematic and conventional use of sounds (or signs or written symbols) for the purpose of communication or self-expression (Crystal in Hoff, 2005: 2). From this statement, it can be inferred that people use language to communicate or express themselves. Language is needed by the people to convey their ideas, feelings, and thoughts to the other people.

Language itself is the collection of sounds, signs, or symbols. People use them all to make their message understandable. Thus, the language ability is a must. That is why the language is always become the important issue in many researches topics.

The development of language is possibly different from one person to other person. This difference is caused by many aspects, such as psychology and social. These two aspects may have influenced people's language ability on how the language is acquired and developed, the language impairments phenomena, and how it is accepted in society.

The analysis of how the language is acquired and developed by the people is seen as the most interesting one among the other. This analysis has possibility to contribute our understanding about when do the people get their first sound and word as the smallest part of a language. If we talk about first language, it means

that the analysis is started from the beginning of human life; that is childhood. So, in this paper, the focus is the first language acquisition in a child to see how the vocabularies are firstly acquired.

Hoff (2005: 3) contends that a child who has acquired language has acquired an incredibly complex and powerful system. This view emphasizes that language is complex and powerful. It strengthens the previous statements about the urgency of language. Hoff then continues that understanding how children accomplish this task will give us something substantial about how the human mind works. The understanding of how the brain works is widely believed to give us opportunity to recognize the brain's factors causing language disabilities. Therefore, the possible preventions or treatments can be set.

The object in this mini research is the first language acquisition in a child age 19 months named Elpon who currently lives in Pekanbaru, Riau Province. Diary is used in this research to keep the vocabularies acquired by Elpon. Before explaining the vocabularies acquired by Elpon, this paper will precede the explanation by giving the theory of the vocabulary development in children age 1;5 – 2;0 years.

> "*It is nothing other than words which has made us human"*
> (Pavlov, 1927/1960).

This proverb can give us an amazingly representation of the importance of words among the people. A word is not just any set of sounds (or gestures) that communicates a meaning, it is a symbol. It stands for something without being part of that something, more than arbitrary symbols, the symbols that can be used to refer to things (Hoff, p.140). It means that people uses word to convey the message about things. People need words to talk their feelings, ideas, and concepts. People use the collection of words that are known in the term of language to establish relationships with the other people.

A word contains one unit of meaning. Todd (1995: 49-50) isolates four of the most frequently implied meanings; (1) the *orthographic* word, which is one which has space on either side of it; (2) a *morphological* word, which considers

form only and not meaning; (3) a *lexical* word, comprehends the various forms of items which are closely related by meaning, e.g., "take", "takes", "taking", "taken", and "took" are five morphological words but only one lexical word; (4) a *semantic* word, involves distinguishing between items which may be morphologically identical but differ in meaning, e.g., "table" can refer to a piece of furniture or to a diagram. The diagram and the piece of furniture are the same morphological word but they are two semantic words because they are not closely related in meaning.

The first language learning is divided into two psychological processes; speech production and speech comprehension. People do these two processes in their efforts to master the language. People cannot comprehend and produced speech when they were born. And then, as the time grows and brain develops, those production and comprehension are started to begin.

The development of speech production is started by the people from; (1) vocalization to babbling to speech; (2) early speech stages: naming, holophrastic, telegraphic, and morphemic; (3) later speech stages: rules formation for negatives, questions, relative clauses, passives, and other complex structures. While the speech comprehension is started earlier than the speech production, it is even hs been started from; (1) fetuses and speech input, (2) newborns (neonates) and speech input; (3) normal children speech comprehension develops in advance of speech production; and there is a (4) relative paucity of comprehension studies (Steinberg, et al., 2001: 3 – 33).

This paper mainly focuses on the development of the children speech production and how they acquired words or vocabularies to begin their language learning experience, especially in the age of under 2 years. So, to see the development in this period clearly, the phases of speech production development are explained one by one.

Vocalization to Babbling to Speech

According to Steinberg (p. 3- 6) infants in around 7 months, children ordinarily begin to *babble*; to produce what may be described as repeated

syllables ('syllabic reduplication'), e.g., 'baba', 'gigi', 'panpan'. Most of the basic syllables are *Consonant + Vowel* type; some consist of closed syllables of the simple *Consonant + Vowel + Consonant* variety. Vocalizations take on the character of speech. Infants from different language communities begin to babble somewhat distinctively, using some of the intonation of the language to which they have been exposed. The production of sounds using the intonation countours of the first language is obviously a learned phenomenon because when infants babble they follow the intonation countours of the language they hear. There is some discontinuity between babbling and meaningful speech where the kinds of sounds which occur in babbling are not always immediately realized in meaningful speech. In vocalization, children produce /k/, /g/, and /l/, and speech will come after the children vocalize and babble /p/, /t/, /m/, /a/, and /o/. Consonants are acquired in a front-to-back-order, e.g., /m/, /p/, /b/, /t/, and, /d/ tends to precede /k/, /g/, and /x/. Vowels seem to be acquired in a back-to-front order, with /a/ (b*a*ll) and /o/ (l*o*w) preceding /i/ (m*ee*t) and /^/ (m*u*d).

Early Speech Stages: Naming, Holophrastic, Telegraphic, and Morphemic

Children can be said to have learned their first word when (1) they are able to utter a recognizable speech form, and when this is done (2) in conjunction with some object or event in the environment. The naming of objects is one of the first uses to which children put words. Holophrastic is the use of single words to express complex thoughts which involve those objects, e.g., a child may point to a hat and say "mama" means "The hat belongs to mama". The next stage is telegraphic, the period when children produce two or three word utterances.

Table 1. Two-Words Child Utterances and Their Semantic Analysis (Steinberg, et.al., 2005: 9)

Child Utterance	Mature Speaker Utterance	Purpose	Semantic Relations (Expressed or Implied)
Want Cookie	I want a cookie.	Request	(Experiencer) – State – Object
More milk	I want some more milk.	Request	(Experiencer) – State – Object; Quantification
Joe see.	I (Joe) see you.	Informing	Experience – State – (Object)

My cup.	This is my cup.	Warning	Possession
Mommy chair.	This chair belongs to Mommy.	Warning	Possession
Mommy chair.	This chair belongs to Mommy.	Answer to question	Possession
Mommy chair.	Mommy is sitting in the chair.	Answer to question	Location
Big boy.	I am a big boy.	Bragging	Attribution
Red car.	That car is red.	Naming	Attribution
That car.	That is a car.	Naming	Equation
No sleep.	I don't want to go to sleep.	Refusal	Experiencer - State – Negation
Not tired.	I am not tired.	Refusal	Experiencer - State – Negation
Where doll?	Where is the doll?	Question	Location
Truck table.	The truck is on the table.	Informing	Location
Daddy run.	Daddy is running.	Informing	Agent – Action
Joe push.	I (Joe) pushed the cat.	Informing	Agent – Action – (Object)
Push cat.	I pushed the cat.	Informing	(Agent) – Action - Object
Give candy	Give me the candy.	Request	(Agent) – Action – Receiver - Object

The last stage is morphemic acquisition in which the two and three word utterances by the children are elaborated. They start to add function words and inflection to their utterances. Function words like the prepositions "in" and "on", the articles "the", "a", and "an", the modals "can", and "will", and the auxiliaries "do", "be" and "have", begin to appear, together with inflections such as the plural /s/ on "cats", and /z/ on "dogs", and tense markings such as the /t/ past tense form on "worked".

METHODS

The object in this mini research is the first language acquisition in a child age 19 months named Elpon who currently lives in Pekanbaru, Riau Province. The data of this research collected through Qualitative data. The researcher

collected the data through observation . The observation data was taken by diary is used in this research to keep the vocabularies acquired by Elpon. Before explaining the vocabularies acquired by Elpon, this paper will precede the explanation by giving the theory of the vocabulary development in children age 1;5 – 2;0 years.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Elpon is a 19 months child. Elpon gets *Bahasa Indonesia* from her mother in daily activities instead of local language that is *Ocu* . Most of people at Elpon's closest environment speak *Ocu.* However, Elpon shows a significant ability to grasp both of the words in these two languages. It can be seen from the total vocabularies got until she is 19 months right now, most of the words are Indonesian language, and some are *Ocu.*

All of the words are got from Elpon's daily activities in having the contacts and experience by the other people. Besides that, the language exposures are always given to her by her mother. Hoff adds that "…the children's first words reflect their experiences. They know people, food, body parts, clothing, animals, and household items that are involved in children daily routines. Routines are also the source of early expression…" To see the complete vocabularies can be seen in the following table.

Table 2. Vocabularies Acquisition by Elpon until 19 Months

No.	Words	English Form	No.	Words	English Form
1	*umi*/umi/	Mom	71	*sayang*/ayan/	love
2	*Abi*/abi/	Dad	72	*cium* /yum/	kiss
3	*Nenek*/nenek/	Grandma	73	*kening* /nin/	forehead
4	*Datuk*/atuk/	Grandpa	74	*taik* /ik/	Feces
5	*Amak*/mak/	Grandma	75	*ayah* /ayah/	grandpa
6	*Kakak* /tatak/	Sister	76	*tante* /ante/	aunt
7	*Abang* /ban/	Brother	77	*om* /om/	uncle

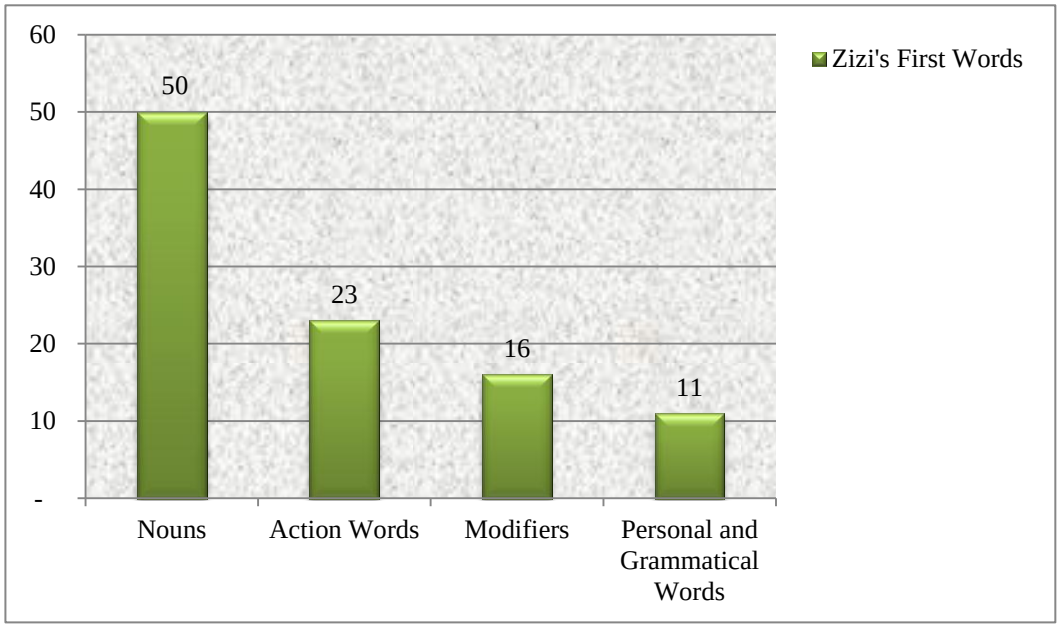
8	*Zizi* /jiji/	Zizi	78	*tutup* /tutup/	close
9	*Satu* /atu/	One	79	*hilang* /iyan/	lose
10	*Dua* /uwa/	Two	80	*lap* /lap/	Towel
11	*Tiga* /iga/	Three	81	*kaset* /acet/	cassette
12	*Empat* /mpat/	Four	82	*Tv* /pipi/	Television
13	*Lima* /ima/	Five	83	*boneka* /eta/	doll
14	*Enam* /enam/	Six	84	*nangis* /ngis/	cry
15	*Tujuh* /ujuh/	Seven	85	*sisir* /cin/	comb
16	*Delapan* /apan/	Eight	86	*bulan* /yan/	moon
17	*Sembilan* /iyan/	Nine	87	*bintang* /itan/	star
18	*Sepuluh* /uyuh/	Ten	88	*boleh* /yeh/	may
19	*Hitam* /itam/	Black	89	*bedak* /dak/	skin powder
20	*Kotor* /totom/	Dirty	90	*nyamuk* /muk/	mosquitoes
21	*Rambut* /abut/	Hair	91	*sholat* /iyat/	praying
22	*mata* /ta/	Eye	92	*naik* /ik/	up
23	*Hidung* /dum/	Nose	93	*turun* /yun/	down
24	*Kuping* /pin/	Ear	94	*kuda* /da/	horse
25	*Telinga* /nga/	Ear	95	*gelas* /iyas/	glass
26	*oma* /oma/	Grandma	96	*sendok* /nok/	spoon
27	*opa* /opa/	Grandpa	97	*bola* /la/	ball
28	*bantal* /tan/	Pillow	98	*bobok* /bobok/	sleep
29	*ini* /ni/	This	99	*babab* /babab/	hit
30	*itu* /itu/	That	100	*pelit* /yit/	Stingy
31	*iyo/iya* /iyo/iya/	Yes	101	*hore* /ye/	horay
32	*cantik* /atik/	Beautiful	102	*balek* /yek/	go home

33	*pusat* /cat/	Navel	103	*awas* /awasy/	get away
34	*ketiak* /iak/	Armpit	104	*Gigit* /didit/	Lose
35	*Mimic* /mimik/	drinking milk	105	*anting* /tin/	Earring
36	*tulis* /yis/	Write	106	*duduk* /duduk/	Sit
37	*ikut* /itut/	Follow	107	*tegak* /dak/	Stand
38	*duit* /wit/	Money	108	*mandi* /ni/	take a bath
39	*mulut* /yut/	Mouth	109	*gitar* /tan/	Guitar
40	*gigi* /gigi/	Teeth	110	*salah* /cayah/	Wrong
41	*sandal* /dan/	Slipper	111	*jajan* /jajan/	eat snacks
42	*mobil* /bin/	Car	112	*Hp* /pe/	Handphone
43	*bunga* /munga/	Flower	113	*motor* /totom/	Motorcycle
44	*cicak* /cak/	Lizard	114	*geli* /yi/	Tickled
45	*kupu-kupu* /pupu/	Butterfly	115	*ayo* /yok/	let’s
46	*Merah* /iyah/	Red	116	*kue* /uweh/	Cake
47	*kaki* /ti/	Leg	117	*kamar* /amal/	Bedroom
48	*baju* /ju/	Shirt	118	*jagung* /dun/	Corn
49	*celana* /ana/	Trousers	119	*gosok* /cok/	Iron
50	*sakit* /atit/	Painful	120	*cilukba* /cilukba/	Cilukba
51	*jangan* /ngangan/	don’t	121	*dapat* /apat/	Get
52	*ndak* /ndak/	No	122	*Pintar* /tal/	Smart
53	*kipas* /pas/	Fan	123	*pipi* /pipi/	Cheek
54	*panas* /nasy/	Hot	124	*tangan*	Hand

				/angan/	
55	*dingin* /ngin/	Cold	125	*jatuh* /atuh/	Fall
56	*bebek* /bebek/	Duck	126	*siram* /iyam/	Pour
57	*kucing* /cin/	Cat	127	*jalan* /iyan/	Walk
58	*mana/ mano* /na?/no?/	where? which?	128	*bunyi* /nyi/	Sound
59	*keras* /iyas/	Hard	129	*tengok* /ngok/	Look
60	*pipis* /pipis/	Urinate	130	*tas* /tas/	Bag
61	*eek* /eek/	Feces	131	*cas* /tas/	Charger
62	*lidah* /dah/	Tongue	132	*buka* /kak/	Open
63	*nyanyi* /nyi/	Sing	133	*jam* /jam/	Watch
64	*balon* /yon/	Balloon	134	*habis* /abis/	Spent
65	*mamam* /mamam/	Eat	135	*takut* /atut/	Afraid
66	*minum* /inum/	Drink	136	*terkejut* /ijut/	surprise
67	*minta* /tak/	Ask	137	*mercon* /con/	Firecracker
68	*punggung* /nun/	Back	138	*jilbab* /bab/	Veil
69	*kentut* /itut/	Fart	139	*lagi* /agi/	again/ more
70	*amin* /amin/	Amin	140	*tambah* /mbah/	Add

The data are taken from making a diary to keep the notes of the numbers of vocabularies acquired. From the table, about 140 words have been acquired by Elpon. Most of the words are Indonesia. Almost all words are pronounced only in the last syllable, some words are pronounced as a whole syllables. Hoff (p.144) believes that in ranging 15 to 24 months the children achieve a productive vocabulary of 50 words. In this case, Elpon in her 19 months age has acquired 140 words.

The words in the table can be classified into the following Nelson words categories; (1) specific nominals, such as *Umi, Abi, Nenek, Datuk* (2) general nominals, including common nouns such as *kucing, bola, balon, jilbab* (3) action words, such as *jalan, bobok, minum, mamam, nyanyi* (4) modifiers, such as *ini, itu, habis* (5) personal social words, such as *ndak, jangan, ayo* (6) grammatical function words, such as *mano/ mana?,* etc. The acquisition of Elpon 's first words is dominated by nouns. It is strengthened by the similar statement of Bates, Benedict, Dromi, Goldin-Meadow, Seligman, & Gelman, Gentner, Gentner & Boroditsky (in Hoff, p.146) that one features of early vocabularies that has received a great deal of attention is the predominance of nouns, either the specific or the general nouns. The data can be seen in the following graph:



From the column graph above, Elpon acquired about 50% of nouns, 23 % of action verbs, and 16 % of modifiers, 11 % of personal social words and grammatical words. Besides acquiring and producing words, Elpon also begins to produces two or more words together. He is starting to compose the simple sentences such as the following conversation;

Elpon : *no mi? / mano umi?* (where is umi?)
Grandma : *umi di Pa…?* (umi is in Pa…?)
Elpon : *…dan.* (…dang.)

Mother : *Abi mana sayang?* (where is Abi dear?)
Elpon : *…bi ja… wit… mimik/ abi kerja, cari duit, untuk beli mimik* (abi is working to make the money to buy milk)

Mother : *Umi kerja dulu ya Nak…* (Umi is going to work daughter…)
Elpon : *..tut Elpon mi…/ Ikut Elpon Mi…* (May I follow you Mom?)
Mother : Cuma sebentar sayang Elpon umi kasih jajan ya, Elpon jajan sama nenek ya. (It won't take a long time darling. I give you pocket money, OK, you can go with grandma to get snacks).
Elpon : dadan…yo /jajan …ya/ (Buying snacks…yes)

Mother : *Elpon… anak sayang umi, coba Elpon hitung jari umi ini*. (Elpon…my sweet daughter, please count these my fingers) Showing fingers to the child.
Elpon : *tu, wa, pat, ma, nam….tu wa pat ma nam…/satu, dua, empat, lima, enam…satu, dua, empat, lima, enam/* (one, two, four, five, six)
Mother : *hahaha pintar anak umi, kita ulang lagi dari satu ya…sa.. ?* (hahaha my daughter is smart, we repeat again from one OK, …sa?)
Elpon : *…tu.* (one)
Mother : *Du…?*
ELPON : *…wa.* (two)
Mother : *Ti…?*
Elpon *:… ga, ..mpat, imma, enam, ujuh, apan, iyan, uyuh hoyeee… /tiga, empat, lima, enam, tujuh, delapan, sembilan, sepuluh, horee/* (…three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, horayy!)

From the conversations, it can be seen that in this age Elpon has acquired not only words, but also tried to compose the simple sentences. Different children may have different characteristic and ability in acquiring the language. This data can be useful for the parents in doing their *parentheses* duty to guide and monitor their children language development.

CONCLUSION

The understanding of this speech production may have beneficial contribution for the parents to decide and consider the kind of language learning and exposures to be given to the children. Parents are also able to simply monitor whether their children grow faster or lower than the normal children development.

There is an expectation that comprehending how the child brain works will help parents to create the better language ability on their children.

REFERENCES

Bloom, B. S. (1994). *Reflections on the development and use of the taxonomy*. In Rehage, Kenneth J.; Anderson, Lorin W.; Sosniak, Lauren A. "Bloom's taxonomy: A forty-year retrospective". *Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education* (Chicago: National Society for the Study of Education) **93** (2). ISSN 1744-7984

Hudson, T. (2007). *Teaching Second Language Reading*. New York : Oxford University Press

Hoff, E. (2005). *Language Development.* (3rd, ed.) Belmont, CA: Wadswore.

Iragiliati, E. dkk. (2007). *Reading 2*.Jakarta: Universitas Terbuka.

Jamieson, S. (1999). *Reading for Understanding: Toward a Research and Development Program in Reading Comprehension.* Santa Monica: RAND Education

Nation.L.S.P. (2009).*Teaching ESL/EFL Reading Writing* .New York: Routledge.

Nunan, D. (2003). *Practical English Language Teaching. (1st ed).* McGraw-Hill Education.

O'Malley J. M. (1996). *Authentic Assessment for English Language Learners*. Practical Approach for Teachers: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company

Richard, J.C. (2002). *Curriculum Development in Language Teaching.* New York. Cambridge University Press.

Steinberg, D.D., Nagata, H., and Aline, David, P. (2001). *Psycholinguistics: Language, Mind, and World.* Harlow, England: Pearson Education Limited.

Todd, L. (1995). *Introduction to Linguistics.* Beirut: York Press.