RECEPTIVE AND EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGE ABILITY OF BILINGUAL CHILD WITH ADHD: A CASE STUDY AT SDS PERMATA ANANDA BEKASI.

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Abstract

This study aimed to find out the receptive and expressive ability of a child with such difficulties and able to acquire not one but two language in young age. It focused on examining the receptive and expressive abilities of a child with ASD/ADHD with initial name “T” who is able to communicate with two language or a bilingual at SDS Permata Ananda in Bekasi. ASD is the condition of a child with developmental disorder mostly affects the ability in interaction, communication, and socializing. This research was conducted by using qualitative method with observation and semi-structured interview techniques in which researcher directly involved in interviews and interactions with the subject. The language used in interactions is Indonesian as T’s first language (L1) and English as her second language (L2). The results of this study indicated that the subject has excellent receptive and expressive abilities in receiving and producing speech both in L1 and L2. The receptive and expressive ability of the subject both in L1 and L2 can be found from how the subject is able to understand the meaning and purpose of the speech of the interlocutor and then provided responses in the form of speech that is appropriate to the context of the speech of the interlocutor. These findings prove that by getting the right treatments and strategies as early as possible, the interaction difficulty will not become a problem in language acquisition.

Keywords: *ASD, ADHD (Attention Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder), Bilingual, Expressive Ability, Receptive Ability.*

INTRODUCTION

Bilingual communication ability that has become a necessity at this era is influenced by various related aspects, such as receptive and expressive ability which is needed to communicate in two languages. Nowadays, there are many children at an early age who are able to communicate in two languages or more. Unfortunately, not all children are born with the same ability to interact naturally. Some children with DD (*Developmental Disorder*) or mental development

disorders such as autism, down syndrome, hyperactivity, experience obstacles in interacting with their surroundings. As in the case with children with ASD (*Autism Spectrum Disorder*), they have difficulty in social interactions that affects delays in language acquisition and communication skills.

As we know, bilingualism is an ability to use two languages in communication, both verbally and in writing. A person can be said to be bilingual if he can produce complete and meaningful speech in another language (Haugen, 1956). In psycholinguistics, someone who can understand and produce a language is considered to have expressive and receptive abilities towards that language. In other words, a bilingual person must have expressive and receptive abilities towards the first and second languages.

ASD (*Autism Spectrum Disorder*) is a developmental disorder that involves a disturbance of one's social abilities and intellectual abilities (Baron-Cohen, 2005). There are various types of ASD depend on the symptoms that happened to the patients, one of the is ADHD (*Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder*). ADHD is ASD with attention deficit and hyperactivity symptoms. Subject of this research is a child diagnosed with those symptoms which classified as ADHD. She now is nine years old and studies at SDS Permata Ananda in Bekasi which is a school with special students with need.

Garfin and Lord (in Paul and Sutherland, 2005) said that communication skills for people with autism are the main factors that determine how broad they can build relationships with others and participate in daily activities. Elizabeth, Fred, and Ludo (2015) even stated that most children with DD need to even choose to be bilingual. This is due to many factors such as their countries that use more than one language, the need for broad communication, educational needs, to the opportunity to have the same degree and access as normal people. Therefore, being bilingual today is a necessity even for people with autism.

However, children need interaction, communication, and socializing to acquire and develop language ability. Children faced the phase when they developing language ability from early age start with babbling, turned into syllable, words, and later sentences. Unfortunately, children with ASD/ADHD

face difficulty to those needs of acquiring and developing language ability. Children with ASD have to be given special treatment and some therapies to help them develop their cognitive and social competent, so they can develop language ability and interaction skill. However, it is not an impossible thing for them to be a bilingual or even multilingual.

This study aims to find out and describe the receptive and expressive abilities of a bilingual child with ADHD (Attention Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder) to speech in both L1 and L2 subjects. The results of this study are expected to increase awareness of children's language development with ASD that if handled quickly and appropriately even children with communication and interaction difficulties are able to acquire even more than one language.

ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder)

DSM-IV (*Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder*) states autism is part of PDD (*Persuasive Developmental Disorder*) which also includes Asperger's syndrome and several disorders with other similar symptoms. From 2013 onwards, the revised latest DSM edition called DSM-V turns autism into ASD (*Autism Spectrum Disorder*) which includes all the symptoms of the previous PDD, but also uses a scale or spectrum that distinguishes the classification of each symptom. Autism which is now also called "*Spectrum Disorder*" due to the wide variety and variety of severity of symptoms experienced by each individual. Based on this understanding, it can be concluded that children with ASD are children who have their own world due to abnormalities in language, cognitive, social, affective, in the first three years of life, so that they experience the development.

ASD can be classified into several types based on differences in symptoms experienced by the patients, such as (1) Asperger's Syndrome characterized by deficiency of social interaction and difficulty in accepting changes in daily routine, (2) Autistic Disorder which is also called *true autism* or *childhood autism*, which is characterized by the condition of children withdrawing extreme to the social environment and being indifferent, (3) Attention Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), which signed by a difficulty in focusing and are not able to

have control in response to some kinds of situation, and (4) "Gifted" Children, who is a child with a condition that has above average intelligence or genius but has behavioral symptoms similar to autism.

ADHD is a neurobiological disorder that has no specific cause. Barkley (2006) described ADHD as a difficulty in regulating and maintaining behavior in accordance with the rules. This has an impact on the emergence of hyperactivity behavior caused by difficulty in controlling and defending the response to a situation. DSM-IV typically describes ADHD as a union of three symptoms of mental disorders namely inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsiveness (Kutscher, 2005). He also added that ADHD children have an inability to inhibit or control their behavior, not an inability to pay attention in themselves.

Receptive and Expressive Language Ability

Child language development experiences a gradual process with stages of age. Logan (1972) explains that children need adults who provide stimulation, both at home, school and the surrounding environment. He divided the stages of children's language development starting from the stages random, jargon, echolalia, expansion to the creative. Children are taught to speak from the signal to symbol stages, from sound to words, and from words to communication skills.

Bowen (1998) explains that language skills are grouped into two groups, namely receptive and expressive language skills. Receptive language is the ability to understand what is seen and what is heard. Mykellbust (1968) in his theory explained that language development cannot be separated from the development of receptive and expressive language. He explained that a person's receptive abilities can be assessed through two language skills, namely reading and listening. In this case, reading and listening are activities that understand the extralinguistic context through linguistic means. In reading, the means of language are conveyed through writing, so the ability needed is about the spelling system. While listening to the language facilities is conveyed orally so that in this activity what is needed is knowledge of the sound system. In other words, receptive language skills are the ability to understand and understand the thoughts, feelings, and desires of others both oral and written.

On the other hand, a person's expressive ability can be seen from the ability to speak and write. In this case, speaking is an activity to convey thoughts, opinions, and feelings using verbal as a means of language. While writing is an expression of language through writing. Expressive means being able to express images, intentions, ideas, and feelings. Therefore, active / repressive language skills are the ability of a person to convey or express the thoughts, feelings, and desires of others both verbally and in writing (Sunardi & Sunaryo, 2007). Children who mastered expressive language skills are said to be able to convey ideas and feelings through words and symbols.

To find out someone's language ability, Bachman (1989) said that there are three main elements in language tests, namely linguistic competence test, language skills test, and literature test. Language skills test includes two elements of language ability, which are receptive and expressive abilities. A person's receptive ability can be assessed through two language skills, that are reading and listening. The overall receptive ability test is to see how a person understands the information conveyed in a particular speech and discourse critically. In general, a person's understanding of the information in speech or related discourse can be seen from the response he gave to the speech and discourse.

On the other hand, a person's expressive ability can be assessed through two language abilities, that are the ability to speak and write. Speaking is an activity to produce language in conveying thoughts and ideas by oral means. While writing is an activity to convey thoughts and ideas in written form. In expressive ability tests, generally what is assessed is the problem of fluency and language accuracy, as well as the clarity of mind conveyed. Therefore, Receptive and expressive ability cannot be separated in acquiring and learning languages, both are needed to perform communication between users.

Bilingualism

The term bilingualism (*English: bilingualism*) in Indonesian is also called *bilingualism*. Haugen (1987) explains that knowing two or more languages means bilingual. Haugen said that a bilingual person does not need to actively use both languages, but it is enough to understand them. Based on this opinion, Haugen

defines bilingualism as "knowledge" about two languages. If he follows Haugen's opinion, then a speaker who knows a second language, even though he has just learned and the language has not been used actively to communicate, but the speaker can already be called a bilingual. Haugen also said that learning a second language, especially a foreign language, will not in itself have an effect on the original language. After all someone who studies a foreign language, the ability of foreign languages or B2 will always be in a position below the native speakers of that language.

In sociolinguistics, bilingualism is defined as the use of two or more languages of a speaker in alternating interaction with others (Mackey 1968, Fishman 1975). To be able to use two languages, of course, one must master the two languages. First, the language itself or its first language (B1) and the second language (B2). People who use the second language are called *bilingual*. Whereas the ability to use two languages is called *bilingualism*. In addition to the term *bilingualism* also used the term *multilingualism*, which is a condition used by more than two languages by a person in interacting with others alternately (Chaer, 2010).

There are two types of acquisition in bilingualism, it is called simultaneous acquisition and sequential acquisition. The simultaneous bilingual acquisition is that the two languages are initially acquired as a single system and then differentiated, or that both languages develop as separate systems of languages (Kamaruddin 1989). Imedadze (in Kamaruddin 1989) outlined his daughter's acquisition of Russian and Georgian languages. Each language is separated by the people who use it. Her parents spoke to her in Georgian, her grandmother and her nanny spoke her in Russian. Meanwhile, sequential bilingual acquisition is a second language acquisition at the age that is over three years old because of the new environment they discover, such as the school, or the new community life. The differences in language that children use at home and school to communicate lead children to become bilingual.

METHODS

This research is a case study of a single subject of child who are diagnosed with ASD. The child's initial name is T who currently in grade 3 at SDS Permata Ananda in Bekasi. She has autism with symptoms of attention deficit disorder and hyperactivity so he is categorized as ADHD. Researcher used observation and semi-structured interviews as the means in data collection. The instrument used was stimulus questions in L1 and L2 as conversation material used by researchers to persuade subject to speak and understand speech both in L1 and L2. The stimulus model was made based on the prediction of the ability of grade 3 elementary school students and mostly were taken from elementary school level textbooks. The stimulus questions were arranged from easy questions that require short answers to questions that require answers with explanations.

In addition, researchers also used the Bachman language test indicators (1989), as the indicators in conducting instruments for collecting data. Explanation from the two experts is then used by researchers as a guide in analyzing data. Researcher conducted this research for 21 days of observation and interaction with the subject. In the first week researcher mostly observed subject's behavior and slowly built in connection to get close to the subject. In the next weeks, researcher performed an interview to the subject with 25-30 questions of daily activities both in L1 and L2. The interview did not always go well since the changes of subject's mood and condition affected a lot in the process of collecting data since the subject is a child with behavior disorder. The recordings of interview were transcribed into written form. Then the data were analyzed with Myklebust's (1968) theory regarding the receptive and expressive language ability.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Subject in this study is T, a child with ADHD (*Attention Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder*) which is one of type of ASD. ADHD itself is a psychological condition where the sufferer has difficulty in focusing, easily distracted, and hyperactive behavior. However, T got proper treatment and therapies from an early age so that she is able to develop a good language skill.

Subjects can use two languages namely Indonesian as the first language (L1) and English as a second language (L2) both receptively and expressively.

Based on the result of observation and data collection, researcher is able to find out the receptive and expressive abilities of the subject to L1 and L2 that she mastered. Data were collected in two languages which were then analyzed separately which are the receptive and expressive ability of the subject to L1 and the receptive and expressive ability of the subject to L2. From interaction in both languages, researcher found out that T is good in delivering and understanding utterances in both L1 and L2.

The receptive ability of the subject to L1 is very good, especially when the psychological condition of the subject is in good condition and when the subject focuses her attention to the interlocutor. Both of those conditions are the main key in the subject's receptive ability. The subject accepts and understands the meaning of the utterances well and is able to give responses both in expressive and body languages. This is possible because L1 is the first language she acquired and she uses it every day in any environment she is in, such as at home and school. The subject is used to and very familiar with L1 so that she has no problem in understanding the utterances in L1 as long as her attention is focused to the interlocutor and she is in a good condition.

Similarly, the expressive ability of the subject in L1 is also very good. As previously mentioned, L1 is the first language she recognizes and is always used in daily activities so that she also has no problem in producing speech or utterances in the form of words, clauses, or sentences. However, the subject is never heard producing utterances that are too complex. This is because the subject is still a child and with ASD condition, so she does not have much interest in interaction with other people. Otherwise, in general the expressive ability of the subject in L1 is good.

For example, when researcher asked about “*bagaimana kabarnya hari ini?*”, she answered “*Baik*”. In such short answer researcher was able to see that she could catch the meaning of the questions that being asked and could answer them with in suitable context. When researcher asked about things she likes, she

was able to mention several things such as what movie she likes, activity she likes to do, and her favorite food. From the response she gave, it showed that she understood the meaning of utterances that was asked to her and she also able to produce answer utterances to respond for the question researcher asked to her. It shows she has good both receptive and expressive ability in L1.

On other \and, T's L2 is English which according to her parents she acquired from watching a lot of learning videos and films in English. Subject also occasionally uses L2 at home to interact and provide comments with her sister and cousins. The receptive ability of the subject to utterance in L2 is very good. She can provide utterance responses in L2 as well as action responses that are appropriate to the context of the utterances. All kinds of responses that she gave when she received the utterance in L2 showed that she is able to understand the meaning of the utterances, which means the receptive ability of the subject to L2 utterance is very good.

The subject is also more active in producing utterances in L2. L1 can be the subject's first language, but it seems like she prefers to communicate in L2, English. It showed when the subject only wanted to read the English part of the story book even though the book also has Indonesian language. The subject claimed not to be able to read L1 even though according to the teacher she can. The subject repeatedly mixed with L2 when responding to the L1 utterance that she received. She also looked like more enthusiastic when the researcher asked questions in L2. She is also more active in answering with L2.

The expressive ability of the subject in L2 is very good. As in L1, the subject is also able to produce direct utterances in L2 in the form of words, clauses, or sentences. She also has good English pronunciation, she even likes to do *story-telling* with English. The subject is also able to write various words in L2. For example, on Kartini's Day school hold an event to celebrating which some students performed what their talents on the stage such as singing, dancing, role-playing, and others. T performed her talent in story-telling. It is incredible to see children with such disorder could performed with confidence in front of parents and teachers who watched them.

Another example is when researcher was giving questions using L2 about her dream when she grows up, she could explain happily what she wants to be when she grows up and why she wants that. She also gave the question back to researcher and she curious about what researcher do. She spoke a lot more when the conversation is in L2. When reading a story book, she could tell what the story about, mentioned the characters of the story and explained a little bit about what happened to the characters in the story. This showed that in reading activity, she is able to understand the written form of language and able to delivering the point of the story orally. With a variety of utterances produced by subject in L2 shows that the expressive ability of the subject is very good as well as the expressive ability of subject in L1, which is the first language.

Thus, the receptive and expressive abilities of subject both in L1 and L2 are as good and are in the same level even though one language he acquired earlier than other one. Both languages are acquired wisely by subject that she precisely uses both of them in communication. By simultaneously using both language in communication, it will help to develop her bilingual ability better and improve her self-esteem in interaction. The subject's ability to be bilingual with the same receptive and expressive abilities between the two languages proves that different psychological states are not a barrier if they are handled correctly and appropriately as early as possible. Hopefully, her bilingual ability will help her find her way to be succeeded in the future.

CONCLUSION

Language ability is categorized to receptive and expressive ability, it is understanding and producing the utterances. This research is about finding out those two main things of language ability in a child diagnosed with ADHD as a type of ASD which known to have difficulties in developing language skill. The results of this research showed that even for a child with such difficulties are able to acquire even more than one language with the right and proper help of treatments and therapies she got in early age. The awareness of the parents to

check their child condition in such early age help her to grow and develop language skill well.

Children's language skills must be trained so that they continue to develop better, especially in children with mental disorders that make it difficult for children to interact. Children with ASD and ADHD need to receive treatment as early as possible correctly so that language is not an obstacle for children to develop and learn. Further research is needed to find appropriate teaching strategies that can help children with special needs learn a second language or even a foreign language that can help the development of children's social interactions.

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