

ABSTRACT

The mastery of a full phonological competence calls for the ability to understand and use the distinctive sound differences and the distinctive features, pronounce and hear utterances in different patterns of prominence, and use an intonation to express the different meaning within the same grammatical construction. In the early childhood, the infants normally are not ready to internalize all these skills fully. Children experience many difficulties in learning their phonological competence such as the misperception of utterances and the incomplete production in their speech. Their linguistic inventory is generally small and the variability of their vocabulary is too. During the early production of their utterances the children often omit certain phonemes, move the place of articulation of the phonemes or substitute them with the others.

An identification to the children's acquisition of phonology will be useful for underlying the way the children acquire their phonology and some factors that influence their level of mastery in the phonological development process. Any normal child is born with a capability of acquiring a language. He is equipped with an inborn mechanism that predetermines their perceptual as well as articulatory ability needed in mastering their speech. In other word, there are some internal factors that influence their acquisition of a language. Moreover, the language input such as an exposure of the language that the children receive in their environment also causes the different level of acquisition among the children. By going deeper to the children's development of phonology, we shall be able to find the characteristics of their acquisition of phonology.

This thesis is based on a special study to many cases that are found among the Javanese-speaking children

between the age of two and three years old during their process of acquiring the Javanese phonology

In line with the main discussion of this thesis, some conclusions are presented as follow: (1) there are some problems that occur during the acquisition of phonology in children; (2) children undergo some phonological processes as the result of incomplete mastery of perception and production of the sounds of their language; (3) there are some factors that influence the children's acquisition of phonology. Among the Javanese-speaking children, there are common tendencies to ommit certain phonemes, change their place of articulation or substitute a certain phoneme with the other in their utterances

Finally, some suggestions worthly mentioned here are: (1) Although generally there is no need to teach their children formally to speak, parents are encouraged to pay attention to the important of exposing sufficiently rich linguistic environments to their children; (2) the process of acquiring a language among the children usually occurs naturally and any effort to force them to speak before it emerges will result in failure.