

# Indonesian Language Ability In Early Children In Insan Kamil Kindergarten

Huriah Raidah S

huriahraidah18@gmail.com  
 Udayana University, Jl. Raya Kampus Unud Jimbaran, 80361, Indonesia

## Abstract

This study aims to 1) describe the types of violations of the maxims of early childhood, 2) identify the differences in the violations of maxims of early childhood, and 3) identify the causes of violations of the maxims of early childhood. The research method used is descriptive analytical. Sources of data were obtained from research informants, namely early age speakers consisting of children aged 4 and 5 years who attended Insan Kamil Kindergarten. A sample of 20 conversational data from early childhood was selected using purposive sampling technique. The data was collected using the conversational listening method. Data were analyzed descriptively using Grice's cooperative theory. The results showed that children aged 4 years violated four types of maxims including; maxim of quantity, quality, relevance, and manner. Meanwhile, children aged 5 years violate three types of maxims, including; maxims of qualitative, quantitative, and relevance. Violations of maxims committed by early childhood are caused by inadequate knowledge and the environment they are in.

Keywords: pragmatic ability, maxim of cooperation, early childhood

## 1. Introduction

Language ability refers to the process of using language that takes place without realizing it, this ability is supported by two processes, namely the understanding process and the publication process. The understanding process involves the ability or intelligence to observe and perceive the sentences heard, while the publication process involves the ability to issue or produce their own sentences. These processes become the main scope that marks the mastery of children's language. Basically, children's language will continue to develop along with increasing age, this is marked by the maturity of the speech apparatus and the child's intellectual ability to understand language. In addition, external stimuli contribute greatly in developing children's language skills.

This is in line with the view of behavioristic psychology which has the view that children learn to speak by imitating the sound patterns they hear from their environment. This view was later refuted by Chomsky (Nativist school) who said that humans from birth have been gifted with language talent by God because they are equipped with language acquisition devices (LAD) (Chaer, 2003). This talent or potential can be seen from biological evidence, namely the mouth, lungs and brain. These two views are interconnected with each other because the potential or talent possessed by children will continue to develop along with the influence of the surrounding environment so that they are able to support and develop children's speaking skills.

Language development in a child aged 3 and 4 years is sometimes still limited, he still often listens, and imitates words that are heard by his parents and those around him, it is not uncommon for children aged 3 and 4 years to be able to say a sentence although the pronunciation is still not quite right. This is because the ability of the speech system is not perfect. The failure of children to do speech correctly is a natural thing, because it is related to speech ability. This speech system will be more developed after a child gets older. Thus pragmatics is the study of the use of language based on context. Context includes all the background knowledge that is assumed to be shared between the speaker and the speech partner and which supports the interpretation of the speech partner for what the speaker intended in the speaking process (Rahardi, 2005).

The pragmatic ability of children based on the above theory refers to the mastery of using language which is related to the context in the form of speech situations. The suitability of these components in speaking indicates that the speaker has adequate pragmatic abilities so as to allow the conversation process to occur in accordance with the goals to be achieved by the speaker and the speech partner. But the question is whether early childhood is able to comply with these components in speaking? To further analyze this matter, in this study the researcher focused on the study of children's pragmatic abilities in obeying the principle of cooperation. According to Grice, conversations that occur in society are based on the basic principle, namely the cooperative principle (Yule, 2006).

Language acquisition is a natural process of mastering language by a child when he learns his mother tongue (native language). This is different from language learning which refers to a formal learning process such as learning in the classroom. Language learning is also related to the processes that occur when a child learns a second language, after he

acquires the first language. Actually the language acquisition process includes two sub-processes, namely: the competency process and the performance process. The process of competence refers to the process of mastering grammar that takes place without realizing it. This process consists of two processes: (1) the understanding process, namely the ability or intelligence to observe or perceive the sentences heard and (2) the publishing process or the process of producing sentences, namely the ability to issue or produce their own sentences.

These two abilities, when mastered, will become the child's linguistic ability to produce new sentences in generative transformation linguistics called language treatment or implementation or in other words performance. The process of acquiring and mastering a child's language is quite an amazing thing, although it is difficult to prove. Various theories from different disciplines have been put forward by language researchers to explain the process of acquiring and mastering language in children. Whether we realize it or not, linguistic systems have been mastered by individual children even without formal teaching.

Based on this, it is necessary to explore language acquisition in two-year-old children. The problem is focused on the acquisition of pragmatics. The sub-focus of the research is directed to determine the influence of pragmatic factors, especially the principle of cooperation-Grice's Maxim on children in interacting, especially when answering questions and maxims that are usually violated and the factors that might influence them.

The problems analyzed are the answers from the dialogues that violate maxim Grice's maxims, namely the maxim of quantity/informativeness (of quantity), maxim of quality/truth (maxim of quality), maxim of relevance i (maxim of relevant), and maxim of clarity (maxim of manner), and the extent to which the child understands the use of body language as a substitute for the answer sentence.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

### Language Acquisition Language

Proficiency refers to the process of using language that takes place without realizing it, this ability is supported by two processes, namely the understanding process and the publication process. The understanding process involves the ability or intelligence to observe and perceive the sentences that are heard, while the publication process involves the ability to issue or produce their own sentences. These processes become the main scope that marks the mastery of children's language. Basically, children's language will continue to develop along with increasing age, this is marked by the maturity of the speech apparatus and the child's intellectual ability to understand language. In addition, external stimuli contribute greatly in developing children's language skills. This is in line with the view of behavioristic which has the view that children learn to speak by imitating the sound patterns they hear from their environment.

This view was later refuted by Chomsky (Nativist school) who said that humans have been gifted with language talent from birth because God is equipped with a language acquisition device (LAD) (Chaer, 2003). Talent or potential can be seen from the biological evidence, namely the mouth, lungs and brain. These two views are interconnected with each other because the potential or talent possessed by children will continue to develop along with the influence of the surrounding environment so that they are able to support and develop children's speaking skills. The development of children's abilities, not only in terms of the ability to master the sounds of letters and vocabulary (grammatical) but also in the form of using more complex language. One of the branches of linguistics with a focus on the study of language use is pragmatics.

Paker (1986) states that pragmatics is different from grammar which is the study of the internal structure of language (Wijana, 1996). Pragmatics is the study of how language is used to communicate. In addition, it defines pragmatics as a field that examines meaning based on context (Yule, 2006). Thus pragmatics is the study of the use of language based on context. Context includes all the background knowledge that is assumed to be shared between the speaker and the speech partner and which supports the interpretation of the speech partner for what the speaker intended in the speaking process (Rahardi, 2005).

The pragmatic ability of children based on the above theory refers to the mastery of using language which is related to the context in the form of speech situations. The suitability of these components in speaking indicates that the speaker has adequate pragmatic abilities so as to allow the conversation process to occur in accordance with the goals to be achieved by the speaker and the speech partner. But the question is whether early childhood is able to comply with these components in speaking?

### Acquiring Pragmatics & Conversational Implicatures

If the phonological, syntactic, and semantic components refer to language acquisition, the pragmatics component focuses more on language use. In carrying out a proper test, it is necessary to comply not only with grammatical rules but also pragmatic compliance. Children also need to be able to master illocutionary acts nicely, namely how to say something, ask something, ask for something. In a conversation, a speaker must have a certain purpose when he says

something. The meaning contained in the utterance is called implicature.

The function of implicatures is to provide explicit examples of how to communicate information without being said. To further analyze this matter, in this study the researcher focused on the study of children's pragmatic abilities in obeying the principle of cooperation. According to Grice, conversations that occur in society are based on the basic principle, namely the cooperative principle (Yule, 2006). Grice also said that in a conversation the speaker will expect that the interlocutor will carry out the conversational contribution as expected when the utterance appears, in accordance with the purpose of the exchange of conversation.

The cooperation that exists in this communication is manifested in four maxims, namely: 1) the maxim of quantity, which is to provide information as appropriate or as informative as possible, and do not provide more information than needed; 2) the maxim of quality (maxim of quality) which is to say something that is considered true or sufficient evidence of its truth; 3) the maxim of relevance (maxim of relevance) which is to provide information that is relevant to the conversation situation; and 4) the maxim of manner, namely giving clear information, in particular avoiding ambiguity, avoiding ambiguity, disclosing information briefly, and disclosing in an orderly manner (Gunawan, 2007).

Violation of the maxim of conversation will give the impression of being awkward and unnatural. This can be seen if the information provided is excessive (violation of maxim of quantity), incorrect (violation of maxim of quality), irrelevant (violation of maxim of relevance), and so on. This awkwardness is usually used in humor. But in reality, in communication sometimes people do not adhere to these principles. This, as revealed by Gunawan, is based on several reasons, for example to give information implicitly (implicature) and maintain the face of the interlocutor (politeness). However, does this also apply to children who are still in the stage of language acquisition? If a violation occurs, is it also caused by the same factors as in the case of adults? This will be answered in the analysis and conclusions of this study.

The objectives of this research are; 1). Describe the types of violations of the maxims of early childhood; 2). Identify differences in violations of the maxims of early childhood and; 3) Identify the cause of the violation of the maxims of early childhood (Wahab, 2013).

### 3. Methods

This research used descriptive analytical method using Grice's maxim of cooperation theory. The descriptive method was carried out to obtain accurate data about the speech used by the informants in order to obtain the types of maxim violations committed by early childhood in Insan Kamil Kindergarten. The analytical method is used to analyze the differences and causes of the violation of maxims committed by early childhood in Insan Kamil Kindergarten. The data limit is given as research material, namely the existing finished material due to the selection of various kinds of speech (Sudaryanto, 1993).

Research data in the form of speech used by early childhood in the process of conversation with researchers. The data sources were obtained from research informants, namely early age speakers consisting of children aged 3, 4 and 5 years who attended Insan Kamil Kindergarten. In addition, data sources were also obtained from the informant's family to obtain information related to identity, in the form of the child's name, age, address, father's name and mother's name. This research was conducted from June 15 to June 27, 2022. Sudaryanto (1990:36) defines population as the total number of people who use a particular language whose boundaries are not known due to the number of people who use it, the length of use, and the area and environment in which it is used. The research population includes the entire speech of early childhood in 20 conversational data (Sudaryanto, 1990). The research sample was taken partly from the total population using purposive sampling technique, in the sense that the sample taken was adjusted to the needs or research objectives of 20 conversational data which was divided into 10 data on each topic of conversation, including; 1) Self and family identity; 2) School; 3) Recognition of surrounding objects; and 4) Daily activities. The method of providing data in this study uses more than one method (triangulation).

Triangulation is an attempt to use other methods to overcome problems that arise in the provision of data (Mahsun, 2013). The method used is the listening method with the conversational engagement listening technique, the note-taking and recording technique and the conversant method. In the listening-engagement technique, the researcher conducts tapping by participating in the speaker while listening, then proceeds with the note-taking technique which aims to describe the non-language behavior of the informant in the conversation process. To make it easier to record, the author makes a listening sheet with the format; a) Listening date; b) Identity of Informants (Children's name, Age, Address, Name of Father & Mother); c) Topic of conversation (identity of self and family members, school, introduction of surrounding objects and daily activities). The conversant method is a method used to carry out direct conversations between researchers and informants (Mahsun, 2013).

This method is carried out by the researcher conducting conversations or contact with the family or people closest to the informant with the aim of obtaining the identity of the informant in the form of the child's name, age, address, name of father and mother. This is done with the consideration that early childhood is not yet possible to provide valid and complete information about their identity. The data analysis technique was carried out qualitatively, which focused on

indicating the meaning, description, clarification, and placement of data in their respective contexts. This technique is used to describe or describe the types, differences and causes of violations of maxims for early childhood.

#### 4. Results and Discussion

The data obtained were then analyzed based on the needs of the formulation of the problem. Based on the four types of maxims of Grice's cooperation, namely the maxims of quality, quantity, relevance and method, the results obtained that based on conversational data, children aged 4 years violated four types of maxims, namely the maxims of quality, quantity, relevance and manner. The same types of violations were also found in the conversational data of children aged 4 years, while children aged 5 years only obtained three types of maxim violations, namely the maxims of quality, quantity and relevance.

The difference in the violation of the maxims of early childhood is seen from the intensity of the violations committed during the conversation process. Based on the existing conversation data, it was found that there were differences in maxim violations committed by children aged 4 and 5 years. 4-year-olds tend to violate the maxims of quality and relevance on each topic of conversation, while 4-year-olds tend to violate the maxims of quality on certain conversation topics, in contrast to the case with 5-year-olds who seem to start obeying the maxim of cooperation, although there are still some violations of maxims for certain topics. The intensity of the violation of the maxim of quality and relevance committed by children aged 4 years is caused by the ability to understand every speech spoken by the researcher so that they tend to respond by speaking incorrectly and not relevant to the context. In addition, children aged 4 years tend to express utterances that are often heard and used on a daily basis. This also indicates that the child does not get stimulation from the closest people who can be used as a source of knowledge and increase the child's experience. For more details can be seen in the following discussion!

Context: Conversation with a 3-year-old child on behalf of Milati Alia, daughter of Mr. Idris and Mrs. Sita. The topic of conversation about self and family name recognition taken on June 15, 2022.

Researcher : nama adek siapa?  
 Alia : Alia  
 Researcher : nama ibunya siapa?  
 Alia : **Nau**  
 Researcher : kalua bapaknya Namanya siapa?  
 Alia : **Uwa**  
 Researcher : Terus nama temannya siapa?  
 Alia : **Si Tiayang nakal dia sering jahilin aku**

Alia's answer "**Nau**" violates the maxim of Quality, because her real name is Mirna, Nau is a nickname she often hears when people call her mother. Then the answer "**Uwa**" when asked about his father violates the maxim of quality, it should be Imran while Uwa is the greeting he uses everyday. Then violate the maxim of quantity, because it gives more answers than what was asked, as in the answer "**Si Tia is naughty she often bullies me**", it should be enough to mention the name.

Context: Conversation with the child on behalf of Muhammad Abi (3 years), the son of Mr. Budi and Mrs. Muslimah. Conversation topics about school taken on June 17, 2022

Researcher : Abisudah sekolah?  
 Abi : sudah  
 Researcher : sekolahnya di mana?  
 Abi : **Ibu Mei**  
 Researcher : sudah bisa baca tulis?  
 Abi : **Sudah**

In the data above there violation of the maxim of relevance of Abi's answer "**Mrs. Mei**" which should be the name of the teacher who taught him at school and who founded the Insan Kamil Kindergarten where he studied. In addition, there is a violation of the maxim of quality in the answer "**yes**" to the question can you read and write? because actually I just learned to write and can't read yet.

**Context:** The conversation was held with Farhan Hadip (4 years) the son of Mr. Edi and Mrs. Rosmini. The topic of conversation is about Recognition of surrounding objects, data taken on June 20, 2022.

Researcher : hewan apa ini Farhan? (menunjuk gambar sapi)  
 Farhan : **Sapi emo**  
 Researcher : Bukan, tapi sapi sayang  
 Farhan : **Mmm, Ibu yang gila.**  
 Researcher : ini kancil  
 Farhan : **Bukan, bapaknya pacito**  
 Researcher : ini gambar apa Farhan?(menunjuk gambar binatang)  
 Farhan : **Yove (maksudnya love)**  
 Researcher : ini hewan apa? (menunjuk gambar kupu-kupu)  
 Farhan : **Apa sih, Farhan ngak tahu, yang ini Farhan tahu (menunjuk gambar lain)**  
 Researcher : Kalau begitu ini gambar apa? (menunjuk gambar apel yang diketahui oleh Farhan)  
 Farhan : **Yove (Love)**  
 Researcher : bukan love itu nak, tapi buah apel  
 Farhan : Aaapeel!

Based on the dialogue data above, it was found that there were several types of maxim violations committed by Farhan. The violation of the maxim of quantity be seen in Andin's answer "**emo cow**", the answer is correct but he adds by pointing to the owner of a cow named emo who is around his house. So the answer given is more than what the researcher asked. Then when he said "**mmm mad mother**" it was a violation of the maxim of manner because the speech was not clear and outside the topic of conversation. Violation of the maxim of quality be seen in the speech "**no, the father is pacito**", Farhan actually provides incorrect information. Violation of the maxim of quality can be seen in Farhan's answer "**yove**" should be a picture of an apple, lastly there violation of the maxim of quantity from Farhan's utterance "**What the hell, andin don't know, this one andi knows**", the speech exceeds what the author wants.

Not much different from the violation of maxim of quality committed by children aged 5 years, sometimes the ability to choose the right vocabulary also causes children to speak incorrectly, although basically the researcher can understand what is being said. As in the following conversation data!

**Context:** Conversation with Amar Muamin (5 years old), the son of Mr. Yanto Balo, SH and Mrs. Iren A.Md.Keb. The topic of conversation is about self and family identity, data taken on June 25, 2022.

Researcher : Nama kamu siapa dek?  
 Amar : Amar  
 Researcher : nama lengkapnya siapa dek?  
 Amar : **Abang Amar**  
 Researcher : Nama bapaknya siapa?  
 Amar : **Ayah**  
 Researcher : Nama ibunya siapa?  
 Amar : **Mama Iren**  
 Researcher : Amar punya kakak ngak?  
 Amar : **Iya, kakak Ainun**

In the data above there violation of the maxim of quality in Amar's answer "Abang Amar" should be Amar Muamin, also in Amar's answer "**father**" and "**mama Iren**", when asked the names of his father and mother, Amar should have answered Yanto and Iren, father is a day's greeting -the day he uses, while Mama Iren is a greeting he hears from people around him. Violations also occurred when rafan answered "**yes, brother Ainun**" because the answers given exceeded what the author asked, thus violating the maxim of quantity.



## 5. Conclusion

In general, the cause of the violation of the maxim of cooperation by early childhood is due to inadequate knowledge so that children choose to respond by using body language, such as nodding, shaking their heads and tending to be silent. The conclusions obtained from this study are as follows: 1) Types of violation of maxims from the conversations of children aged three years, including violations of the maxims of quality, quantity, relevance and manner, the same types of violations were committed by children aged 4 years, while children aged 5 years violates three types of maxims, including the maxims of quality, quantity and relevance; 2) There are differences in maxim violations committed by early childhood.

Children aged 4 years tend to violate the maxims of quality and relevance, while children aged 5 years tend to violate the maxims of quality, while children aged 5 years seem to start obeying the maxim of cooperation, although there are still some violations of maxims for certain topics; and 3) The cause of the violation of maxims by early childhood is more due to inadequate knowledge of early childhood. This is indicated by the use of body language, such as nodding, shaking the head and tending to remain silent.

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