

Semantic and Pragmatic Meaning in Indonesian Child Utterances

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Abstract—This research aims to classify and analyze semantic and pragmatic meaning in Indonesian child utterances, as a phase of child language acquisition. The data in this study collected by recording a child's utterances for 15 months, when the child is 12 - 27 months old. Collected data then classified into pragmatic and semantic meanings. The utterances collected including 4 utterances namely 'Mandi' (take a bath), 'Ayam' (chicken), 'Kucing' (cat), and 'Cantik' (beautiful). The results show that pragmatic and semantic meanings found in utterances such as 'Dudu'- 'Mani'- 'Mandi', 'Ayam', 'Hus-hus'- 'Memeng'- 'Kucing', and 'Nantik'- 'Cantik'. Moreover, the semantic meaning only seen in child's speech, while pragmatic meaning can be seen from speech and nonverbal.

Keywords—child utterances; pragmatic meaning; psycholinguistics; semantic meaning

I. INTRODUCTION

Language acquisition can be seen as a natural process that will occur to every child since their young age. Each child will follow similar stages in language development [1]. Language Acquisition is one of the most fascinating facets of human development. Children acquire knowledge of the language or languages around them in a relatively brief time, and with little apparent effort [2]. The ability to get and understand the language is inherited genetically but the particular language that children speak is culturally and environmentally transmitted to them. Children all over the world acquire their first language without tutoring. Utterance is one evidence of language acquisition, the utterances of children in 12 months are different from the utterance of adults.

Utterance meaning is the basis of speaker meaning. When speaker say something and the hearer misinterpret, so the speaker must repair by making another utterance. On most occasions the utterance meaning is presumed to be what speaker meant [3]. Child's utterance is different from adult. An utterance consists of one or more words, spoken together under a single intonational contour or expressing a single idea [4,5]. Indeed, most theories of multi-word utterance or sentence production ultimately boil down to an account of how sentences acquire their word orders and structures, how the dependencies between words are accommodated (e.g., subject-verb agreement), and a functionally independent account of how individual content words are generated [6,7]. Every

utterance has meanings, including pragmatic meaning and semantic meaning.

According to Yule, pragmatics is concerned with the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker (or writer) and interpreted by listener by a listener (or reader), pragmatics is the study of speaker meaning [8]. It is about analysis of the utterances of the speaker mean, because what the speaker says sometime it is not the mean of the utterance, depend on the context. Pragmatics can be showed by verbal or nonverbal. In verbal language acquisition, to utter something children sometime use one word to many meanings that still relate. Then, for non-verbal, children communicate with adult or another person with do the act that the act has meaning. Pragmatic acquisition of children actually begins early, moreover before they can produce speech [9]. Child can do the act for telling something to adult, like crying when he is hungry or thirsty. So, Pragmatic appears when a child does not know the lexicon of some words. Meanwhile, Semantic is the study of meaning in human language [3]. Human language develops step by step, it develops with the process. Semantic meaning is the last process after phonological complex, structural sentence then pragmatic meaning. Children's early utterances, consisting primarily of single words, were once considered to carry the meaning of whole sentences; they were labeled holophrastic.

The researches about child's language acquisition have been conducted in many aspects, such as speech act [10], The acquisition of Stylistic Variation [11] and a 1,4-year-old child language acquisition [12]. However, the study about semantic and pragmatic meaning in children language acquisition has been not found yet. Therefore, this research is conducted to analyze semantic and pragmatic meaning of children utterances as a phase of children.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

The data collection in this study conducted by recording child utterances when interacting with other people. Research subject in this study is a 12 months old child. The child was born in April, 13 2016, an Indonesian child who grew up in Indonesian environment. The data have been collected within 15 months, when the child is 12 until 27 months old.

III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The data was taken from the child utterances. The research focuses on semantic and pragmatic meaning of utterances. The data those are showed are limited to some utterances or words.

A. Dudu - Mani - Mandi

There are 3 steps to utter taking a bath or taking a shower from the data in this study. The first when the child is 12 months, the second when the child 18 months and the third in 27 months. The data show in table 1.

TABLE I. INDONESIAN CHILD UTTERANCE 'MANDI' IN 12 MONTHS

Age	Utterance/word	Semantic	Pragmatic (V: Verbal; NV: nonverbal)
12 months	Dudu	Taking a bath	Taking a bath with playing (V)
18 months	Mani	Taking a shower	Washing body (V) Washing face (V) Washing hand (V) washing the genital or anus (V)
27 months	Mandi	Taking a shower	Washing body (V) Washing face (V) Washing hand (V) washing the genital or anus (V)

As seen in table 1, child usually takes a bath using bathinette (the thing for baby taking a bath). She says 'Dudu' for taking a bath. 'Dudu' here is meaning for duduk (sitting down). Semantic meaning for this activity is taking a bath, but for pragmatic meaning for this activity is taking a bath with playing, playing with toy ducks or dolls in the bathroom.

In 18 months, the child can utter 'mani' for mandi (taking a bath/ taking a shower) in semantic meaning. Beside the semantic meaning, child has been developing the skill of utterance. The 'mani' is pragmatic meaning for all activity that relate with water, like washing part of body, washing face, washing hand that is done in the bathroom.

The child can say 'Mandi' that has semantic meaning taking a bath fluently in Indonesian, but she thinks that 'mandi' is utterance for all activity in the bathroom that use water, like taking a bath, washing body, washing face, washing hand, and other body parts.

B. Ayam

There are 2 steps to utter chicken. The first when the child 20 months, and the second when the child 26 months. The data show in table 2.

TABLE II. INDONESIAN CHILD UTTERANCE 'AYAM' IN 20 MONTHS

Age	Utterance/word	Semantic	Pragmatic (V: Verbal; NV: nonverbal)
20 months	Ayam	chicken	Bird (V) Duck (V)
26 months	Ayam	Chicken	Fried chicken (V) French fries (V)

At 20 months old, the child can say 'ayam' that has semantic meaning chicken. She can pronounce well. Beside as chicken, 'ayam' also understood as bird or duck as pragmatic meaning.

At 26 months old, the child begins to understand that there is other meaning for 'ayam' but in different context. 'ayam' is chicken for semantic meaning. But for pragmatic meaning 'ayam' is not only as a fried chicken but also french fries, because fried chicken and french fries in one place, so the child inter prate that fried chicken and french fries are same name.

C. Hus-hus, Memeng, Kucing

There are 3 steps to utter cat. The first when the child 12 months, the second when the child 18 months and the third when the child 27 months. The data showed in table 3.

TABLE III. INDONESIAN UTTERANCE 'HUS-HUS' IN 12 MONTHS

Age	Utterance/word	Semantic	Pragmatic (V: Verbal; NV: nonverbal)
12 months	Hus-hus	cat	Pets (V)
18 months	Memeng	Cat	Indicating a cat (NV)
27 months	Kucing	Cat	Indicating a cat (NV)

Speech production of children are from imitating people around him. From the data found that the child gets 'hus-hus' because she looked her mother habitual. Her mother said *hus-hus* to drive away a cat that comes to her. So, the child imitates to produce *hus-hus* as all pets not only for a cat.

In 18 months, another word come from other people beside her mother to indicate a cat, that is 'memeng'. in this data pragmatic acquisition is nonverbal, that is indicating a cat. Indonesian child usually calls 'memeng' for cat. Adult usually does not use word 'memeng' for indicating cat, but 'kucing' for indicating cat.

The language acquisition develops in 27 months. The child can produce a word as the name in Indonesian 'kucing' for cat. Although the pronounce to speech has been not fluent yet. 'Kucing' is utterance that has pragmatic meaning for indicating a cat. It is non-verbal pragmatic.

D. Nantik – cantik

There are 3 steps to utter beautiful. The first when the child 14 months, the second when the child 20 months and the third when the child 24 months. The data show in table 4.

TABLE IV. INDONESIAN UTTERANCE ‘NANTIK’ IN 14 MONTHS

Age	Utterance/word	Semantic	Pragmatic (V: Verbal; NV: nonverbal)
14 months	Nantik	Beautiful	Wearing earrings (V)
20 months	Nantik	Beautiful	Wearing band (V) Wearing hairpin (V)
24 months	Cantik	Beautiful	Wearing band (V) Wearing hairpin (V) Wearing earrings (V)

Because the mother often utters ‘cantik’ when the child is wearing earrings, so the child thinks that ‘cantik’ means wearing earrings. The pronounce for ‘cantik’ is ‘nantik’ means beautiful.

Beside utterance for wearing earrings, ‘nantik’ has pragmatic meaning for wearing band or wearing hairpin. The child also thought that ‘nantik’ is word for earrings, band, hairpin.

In 24 months, the child develops her pronunciation. The child can utter ‘cantik’ for beautiful in semantic meaning, then for pragmatic meaning ‘cantik’ still as utterance for saying wearing band, wearing hairpin and wearing earrings. The child also still thinks that band, hairpin and earrings are ‘cantik’.

The observation is beginning when the child is turning 12 months, according to Steinberg and Sciarini that on average, it would seem that children utter their first word around the age of 10 or 12 months [13]. Some of this variability has to do with physical development, such as the musculature of the mouth, which is essential for the proper articulation of sounds. This research is a psycholinguistics study, which includes semantics, and pragmatics analysis. Psycholinguistics is about the acquisition of Indonesian child. The first language acquisition is phonetic and phonology; there are processes in development of speech production of the child. In the first year (12 months) the child has produced the speech that have meaning. ‘Dudu’ has semantic meaning as ‘Duduk’. It shows that the child wants to take a bath with bathinette (the thing for baby taking a bath). ‘Dudu’ in pragmatics means that the child wants to take a bath with playing in the bathroom. After 18 months, the child has been produced the word ‘Mani’ (for ‘Mandi’), so there is the development vocabulary in child utterance but the pronounce has been fluent yet. The child says ‘mani’ for ‘mandi’; there is missing spelling here, she has been produced ‘d’ yet in Indonesian. In 27 months, the child can pronounce word for taking a bath well that is ‘mandi’, it shows that there is the development for the pronounce in Indonesian.

But for meaning, the child is still that ‘mandi’ is the activity in the bathroom. There are not the differences among taking a bath, washing the genital or anus or washing other part of body.

For the second utterance, the child interprets that chicken, duck, and bird are same because they have same characteristic; have two legs, have the same size, have resemble shape. So, in pragmatic meaning the child interpret that duck and bird are chicken. Then after 26 months, because of the child’s experience in eating, the family take her to fast food restaurant and says ‘ayo kita makan ayam’ (let’s eat chicken), so the child thinks that the french fries also is ‘ayam’. It shows that the language acquisition influenced by the habitual of people around the child.

For the third utterance, the child interprets ‘hus-hus’ is utterance for pets, especially for pets that have four legs. The utterance ‘hus-hus’ comes from the habitual of the child’s mother when there is cat that come to her, she says ‘hus-hus’ for casting out a cat. This perceptual ability vanishes gradually over the second half of the first year of life, and by about 12 months of age infants perform like adults, reliably discriminating only those speech sounds that are phonemic in the language of their environment [14]. Then the child thinks that hus-hus is naming for cat or other animals that have characteristics same as cat, such as dog, rabbit. The child imitates what adults say, she imitates not only what adult uttered but also adult act. Pronounce sounds and words are learned by children, it is imitation and children seem to enjoy imitating the sounds that they hear. In 18 months, the child interprets that a cat is ‘memeng’. ‘memeng’ is only for cat, so ‘memeng’ is utterance for indicating a cat. It is as nonverbal pragmatic.

The fifth data is ‘nantik’. ‘nantik’ is utterance for ‘cantik’. it has semantic meaning as beautiful. Pragmatic meanings for nantik in 14 months are wearing earring. It happened because in that month the child did not want to wear earrings, so her mother praises the child ‘dede cantik banget’: ‘you are beautiful’, then the child call ‘nantik’ for naming wearing earrings. Beside wearing earring, utterance ‘nantik’ is for wearing band and wearing hairpin on her hair. In 14 and 20 months the baby utters beautiful with ‘nantik’ then in 24 months the baby can pronounce ‘cantik’ for beautiful. So, the pronounce of child utterance develops in 24 months. Beside that the pragmatic meaning for ‘cantik’ is wider than before.

Soenjono tells about the language acquisition in Indonesian child, the object for his research is his grandchild [15]. He says that pragmatic acquisition in child is nonverbal utterance. The weakness of this research because collecting the data are done not every time, as we know that the development of child speech production is unpredictable. For this research, the researcher found that the pragmatic acquisition appears in non-verbal and verbal. Nonverbal appeared when the child doesn’t know how to utter the word. Whereas Nurjamiaty tells about the language acquisition of child 3 years old based on his favorite show reviewed from semantic construction [16]. This research tells about language acquisition of child that is influenced by something. Different from my research, the data collect naturally, it is not influenced by anything.

IV. CONCLUSION

From the analysis that has been done from 12 months to 27 months of the child, the researcher can concluded that the researcher obtains the findings as follow: 'Dudu'-'Mani'-'Mandi', 'Ayam', 'Hus-hus'-'Memeng'-'Kucing', 'Nantik'-'Cantik' have two kind of meanings they are semantic and pragmatic meaning. Semantic meaning seen when the child producing speech, meanwhile pragmatic meaning can be seen from verbal or non-verbal. Non-verbal appears when the child indicating something. Verbal utterances appears when child does not know the lexicon of some words, and the child's language develops for several months. The language development consists of phonology and semantic and pragmatic meaning.

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