

SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION: A CASE STUDY OF A ONE- AND- A- HALF- YEAR-OLD FILIPINO CHILD

By

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

According to studies, a child at an early age, who has not entered to formal schooling can already acquire language. Hence, many theories have sprouted to explain this phenomenon to us yet no theory could exactly explain how a child can acquire a language at an early age knowing that learning language is one of the arduous skills a human can master. Though many theories are accepted by the society but weaknesses of its findings have been found out; making it unacceptable to others. Hence, a need to make an integrated theory of language is proposed so salient features of accepted theories will be gathered and united into one theory.

However, this case study focuses only to some salient features of some theories to further explain how they help in second language acquisition such as: the effects of imitation and early gestures in second language acquisition and the processes on how children at an early age assign words to things.

Further, to find out the answers to these research concerns, the researcher chose his case study subject in accordance to the faculty-in-charge's given guidelines. Hence, the researcher chosen Matteo Razon, who is his colleague's one-and-a-half-year-old son. Matteo's first language is Filipino and the ways to find out on how he acquired his second language was done through more than 30 hours of observations and interviews with his parents then presented in a case study research format.

The researcher verified the findings from the observations and interviews in the linguistic theories from the readings given. However, if the findings were not confirmed from the modular readings, the researcher then included those in the recommendations for further study and research.

The modular readings, which the researcher anchored his study, were more on Gleason (2013), Bavin (2009), Lust (2006) and many more. However, there were findings from observations and interviews, which somehow can't be confirmed from the studies; hence, including those in recommendations.

From the linguistic theories and observations, the researcher found out the following: 1) imitation and use of gestures are indeed two of the most helpful mechanisms in acquiring second language 2) the imitation process is a shortcut way in learning a second language 3) children analyse what they've heard and copied 4) gestures help the child in acquiring second language in such a way that it allows the child to remember the words easily since the child will have a physical experience of the meaning 5) use of gestures help in communicating using the second language

because it replaces the unknown words 6) motoric image from gestures makes a strong connection between the word and its meaning 7) children develop vocabulary through varied techniques such as reading a book and having a sustained communication through interesting topics 8) it is in conversations wherein a child can learn new words 9) pretend play and communicating with more knowledgeable others help a lot in learning the meanings of words.

However, despite those good findings from this study, the researcher also recommends for further research on some instances, which this study can't answer, such as : 1) the effectiveness of imitation to children with hearing impairment 2) how can children with poor environment and whose parents or caregivers are not educated be taught on his second language? Are there other ways to teach the child his second language given this situation? 3) Are gestures still effective if a word being acted out can be interpreted differently by the receiver?

Hence, from this study, it verified that Matteo, the subject of the study, partially learned his second language through imitations and use of gestures. Matteo acquired some words he knows in English by just copying words or sounds from the adult who surround him most of the time. Further, it was also effective for Matteo to be rewarded so as to produce the imitated words correctly and be spoken again and again to master the target language. Further, he also used gestures to be understood by the people around him. When he didn't know the word to say, he pointed out or nodded. Lastly, he assigned words to things by always presenting to him the things accompanied by saying its name and by reading picture books with him.

II. INTRODUCTION

"The development of language is an amazing, yet basically universal, human achievement. It poses some of the most challenging theoretical and practical questions of our times: Does an infant, or even the developing fetus, process language? If so, what aspects of speech and language can they perceive? What if no one spoke to them—would children invent language by themselves? How do young children acquire complex grammar?" Gleason, J.B. (2013).

These are some of the questions that Language Acquisition theories try to explain. Linguistic experts such as Chomsky (1968), Piaget (1966), Gleason (2013), Lust (2006), Bavin (2009) and many more have tried their best to explain to us how language is acquired by humans. However, there's no such theory, which has perfectly explained to us how language is installed in us.

There are a lot of factors to consider when explaining language acquisition since humans are diverse in nature. Sex, age, race, religions, nationality and etc. are just few to mention, which make explanations of language acquisition of each of the theories can't cover it all. Hence, there's a need to make integrated theory of language acquisition, which scope and coverage are wider and broader to further elaborate each factor and to gather the salient features of each linguistic theory.

Other than those, learning language is also a process thus there are a lot of developmental aspects to consider such as phonological development, semantic development, morphological development and how language is used in a context. All of these have to be explained also since learning a language is in a gradual process. Just what they say, from gestures to words to sentences or from short movements to discourse. However, explanation was not that easy, because cross-linguistic differences also matter. Theories need to consider again the different languages of

different peoples. This is one of the challenges also that linguists have difficulty explaining language acquisition. Yet, there's one thing that the linguists have agreed upon and that humans typically follow certain stages of language acquisition.

Hence, studies like this paper are helpful to give people, who study language acquisition, a better view of how language is acquired by a certain person. This study helps in the realm of language development study in such a way that a certain aspect or aspects of language acquisition is/are discussed thoroughly with evidences. Good thing also with this kind of study is that there's an integration of the different theories made by famous linguists. This study would somehow serve as an evidence in a simple way that their notions are true and should be accepted or that their ideas need further scrutiny so revisions or further studies would be made.

Further, this study focuses on how language is acquired through the two mechanisms such as imitation and gestures, and the way a learner assigns words to things. To specify and to concretize these concerns, here are the questions that would lead us to a clearer view of how language is acquired by such:

- 1. Is imitation enough for L2 words to be acquired? Does positive reinforcement strengthen such mechanism?**
- 2. How does the subject use gestures to support his need to learn the language?**
- 3. How does a child assign invented words to certain things?**

Lastly, outcomes of this study would also help not only the people in the education industry but also the caregivers, parents and other institutions, which have a direct contact with the child. This will inform and teach them how they should cater learners' responses in the most careful way and the need to analyse such may it be a movement, short, long, new or old words. Further, this study would also reveal why a child is called as "good imitator" and that as adults, we should be keen and prudent to whatever words or utterances we give to the child, since there's a bigger tendency that they will echo or imitate those. Then, what are the ways that pave way for the child to name things.

III. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURES

3.1 FOREIGN LITERATURES

3.1.1 STUDIES ON LANGUAGE ACQUISITION THROUGH IMITATION

Lust (2006) discussed that an "Elicited Imitation allowed children to copy pre-designed and controlled words to test specific operations that explain them (Lust, Flynn and Foley 1996). Further, there's an innate ability for imitation in human, making the EI method accessible to young children (Piaget 1962; Meltzoff and Moore 1983). Use of EI depends on a remarkable and important fact about language: it appears to be virtually impossible for children (or for the adult) to just imitate a sentence and to repeat it without processing it. Production thus relates to this active analysis. In other words, it is easier for a child to imitate words from adults because humans have the inborn ability to do it. It also states that a child does not only copy words or sentences, but he/she also processes the sound and the syntax of the words or sentences heard.

Gleason, J.B. and Ratner, N.B (2013) studied that by the time children begin to learn a vocabulary, they already have passed through a lot language experiences.

Children's earliest words usually appear in a lot of linguistic activities and one of those is imitation. This statement wants to present that imitation is one of the mechanisms on how a child acquire words before he begins to acquire vocabulary words.

Gleason, J.B. and Ratner, N.B (2013) said that children's word combinations can be acquired by imitation training and rewarding successive approximations to adult-like word strings. This study provides evidence that imitation does not only help a child acquire words but also it helps in combining words together.

Gleason, J.B. and Ratner, N.B (2013) concluded that behaviorists rely on imitation as an important language acquisition mechanism because they considered it as a shortcut in learning a language. "Imitation may be an exact copy of observed behavior, but it is not limited to exact copies (Bandura & Walters, 1963)." Children may imitate but not the perfect imitation only resemblance.

Whitehurst and Novak (1973) presented new grammatical forms to children in two conditions. In the first condition, an adult simply modelled the target rule for the child. The second condition involved "imitation training," which motivated the child to try to reproduce the form if imitation had not occurred spontaneously. Such "imitation training" was effective in getting the children to use the targeted rules in sentences. This study tells us that imitation training also helps the child learn the rules of language.

Gleason, J.B. and Ratner, N.B (2013) said that the notion that language is "just another behavior" is also unlikely. "There are simply too much data that suggest that humans are uniquely constructed to detect and process language information differently from other information. Further, infants display a number of speech perception skills very early in infancy that are unlikely to be learned." This statement somehow questions the validity of imitation because it stated that a child also can learn mechanisms other than imitation.

Troike, M.S., (2012) wrote that the most believed view by the middle of the twentieth century was that children learn language by imitation (the stimulus-response theory). It might be true that imitation contributes to initial learning of word and sounds, but there are utterances, which are produced by a child that they have never heard before. These findings reveal that imitation somehow cannot answer the words which are quite original of the child.

Troike, M.S., (2012) "We also know that children do not learn language simply by imitation because they do not imitate adult language well when asked to do so. This simply means that personality factor also affects or hinders the child's way of learning words through imitation". For example (adapted from Crystal 1 997b: 236):

CHILD: He taked my toy!

MOTHER: No, say "he took my toy."

CHILD: He taked my toy!

(Dialogue repeated seven times.)

MOTHER: No, now listen carefully: say "He took my toy."

CHILD: Oh! He taked my toy!

3.1.2 STUDIES ON IMITATION REINFORCEMENTS ON LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Gleason, J.B. and Ratner, N.B (2013) stated that speaking (and understanding speech) must be brought under the control of stimuli in the environment by reinforcement, imitation, and successive approximations to mature performance (known as shaping). This statement tells us that reinforcement helps in language acquisition by prolonging the focus of the child in the process of acquiring.

Gleason, J.B. and Ratner, N.B (2013) stated that children successfully imitate new words and forms, behaviorists assume that reinforcement occurs, either from adults or from the children themselves. The fact that the process of imitating in itself becomes reinforcing suggests that children will use imitation more frequently over time. Thus, imitation serves as a relatively flexible and frequently used learning strategy that enables rapid learning of complex language behaviors. This reveals that positive reinforcement helps in strengthening the effectiveness of imitation to a language learner.

Gleason, J.B. and Ratner, N.B (2013) studied that throughout development, behaviorists assume that children's caretakers industriously train children to perform verbal behaviors, usually after the parent has provided an example: "Say bye-bye. Bye-bye." In this way, the adult provides the child with both mature speech exemplars and training in imitation of adult speech. When children successfully imitate what the adult just pronounced, the children are rewarded. In addition, the word dog is provided in the presence of dogs, boy in the presence of boys, and so on. Thus, the acquisition of both receptive and productive vocabulary begins to accelerate as all the types of learning—classical, operant, and imitative—converge to direct and control the child's language behavior. Behaviorists assume that the course of language development is determined largely by the course of training, not maturation.

Aamir (2019) said that another part of Skinners theory is reinforcement, children learn through positive and negative reinforcement, rewarding them with praise when they say something correctly and punishing/correcting them when they say something wrong. For example a mother says "what's that animal?" the child replies "it's a tiger." the mother corrects and reinforces the child by saying "No, that's a lion." The child imitates the word "lion" and the mother then replies back by saying "yes, a lion" which is telling the child that it has said the word correctly and also giving the child confidence with the word. This statement reveals that positive and negative reinforcement can be done during imitation.

Echoic behavior produces generalized conditioned reinforcement such as praise and attention when a young child correctly repeats a word or sentence (Sundberg & Michael, 2001). Cotter, M. J. and Schinkel, P.M. (2014) gave an example like a parent may say to a child, "This is an apple. Can you say apple?" If the child responds apple, then the parent will most likely provide a positive physical and / or verbal reinforcement such as a smile or a hooray. These findings tell us that positive reinforcement is also one of the factors in making the mechanism of imitation successful.

3.1.3 STUDIES OF GESTURES ON LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Meadow, S.G. and Alibali, M.W. (2012) stated that "gesture plays a role in communication at a variety of timespans—in speaking at the moment, in learning language over developmental time, and in creating language over shorter and longer periods of time." This reveals that gesture also helps in acquiring a language.

Gestures helps in communication; however, in different format. Speakers communicate through gestures with visual imagery, while speech in words (McNeill 1992). Gestures as discussed here simplify and concretize communication through movements, which in turn lessen the processes of word retention and recognition.

Kristi (2017) explained that child's gestures have been linked to language development. Some of the impacts seen include: (1) gestures help the child to learn more vocabulary (2) a child who gestures tend to learn the words easily (3) gestures and words combination is learned first before word and word combinations and (4) gestures help the child in making sentences. These tell us that gestures help a lot in language learning and it has many advantages, which are proven and tested.

"The gestures help to convey meaning and to compensate for speech difficulties (Goldin-Meadow, 2003), if gesture is performed during learning of words and phrases, they enhance memory compared to pure verbal encoding (Zimmer et al., 2001); therefore, gestures, as the nonverbal behaviors must be considered as a key factor in second language acquisition." These statement tell us that gestures boost the memory of the speaker on verbal information.

Gestures with speech help in remembering verbal information. Researchers have demonstrated that iconic gestures develop foreign language learning. Some studies show that the utilization of gestures during word learning facilitate new vocabulary retrieval in both children (Tellier, 2008) and adults (Kelly et al., 2009). Hence, iconic gestures help in triggering the retrieval of new words.

Similarly, in Manuela et al. (2011)'s study, it verified the close relationship between gesture and language and extended to word learning in a second language. Iconic gestures then produce significantly better memory performance on the word learning of a second language than meaningless gestures. Tellier (2008) also revealed that doing the gestures while repeating the words enables children to remember vocabulary better in L2, as they can get physically involved in their learning. These findings reveal that iconic gestures are effective in remembering words.

"Yoshioka and Kellerman (2006) stated that, in the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and use, learners' gestures have mainly been regarded as a type of communication strategy produced to replace missing words." Thus, gestures fill in the gaps also found in speech.

Tellier (2008) conducted a study to test the effect of gesture on second language learning. 20 French children learning English of an average age of 5.5 years, were presented with 8 common English words, with four of them with gestures and four of them with pictures. In the gesture condition, children had to do gestures while repeating words. He found out that enacted items were remembered better than those presented with pictures only, thus confirming the impact of gesture production on word memorization. This proves that gestures indeed strengthen memory of verbal information.

"More than three decades ago, Engelkamp & Krumnacker (1980) reasoned that the gesture accompanying a word is connected with an existing image of its semantics. Saltz & Donnenwerthnolan (1981) proposed that enactment is effective because it leads to the storage of a 'motoric image.' This means that the reason why gestures help in remembering words is that they produce concrete images in the mind.

Bavin, E.L. (2009) "expounded that children thus exploit the manual modality at the very earliest stages of language learning. Perhaps they do so because the manual modality presents fewer burdens. It certainly seems easier to produce a pointing gesture to indicate a drum than to articulate the word drum. It may even be easier to generate a drum-beating motion than to say drum – children may need more motor

control to make their mouths produce words than to make their hands produce gestures. Whatever the reason, gesture does seem to provide an early route to first words, at least for some children."

3.1.4 STUDIES ON VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT

Dickinson, D. (2019) said that "for a child to have a rich and fulfilling life, one of the best things you can do is help build your child's vocabulary." Hence, it is in vocabulary learning that the child will have a better and wider perspective of the world since he understands the things around him more.

Dickinson, D. (2019) also added that as early as possible, child should be taught the meanings of the words they acquired. Vocabulary development is extremely rapid. "Between birth and second grade, children, on average, learn about 5,200 root words." The ability of the child to understand vocabulary words determines the number of vocabulary he has.

Dickinson, D. (2019) believed that there are seven best ways to develop children's literacy, that would help parents and educators build children's language and vocabulary skills:

1. Talk about objects and events that interest the child

Talk about something that would interest the child. These are good opportunities for adults to name, describe and explain things to the child.

2. Have many conversations with children

"The speed with which children assign meaning to words is strongly related to the amount of language they have heard as part of adult-child conversations."

3. Engage in sustained interactions

Have quality talk with your child. Let there be exchange of ideas between you and your child. Be sincere when you talk to your child and process what he says so internalization and storing will happen.

4. Read and discuss books

Reading books helps the child name a lot of things especially books with pictures.

5. Use varied words while expanding world knowledge

"Children acquire knowledge rapidly as they learn words that refer to more complex concepts. As time goes on, these words will be used during conversations about new ideas and experiences."

6. Talk about past events

Through speech we can bring back time and talks about what will happen soon. It is in talking about the past that children will also learn new words. "Regular conversations about the past foster vocabulary learning."

7. Engage in pretend play

"Language enables children to construct and live in imaginary worlds. The talk that occurs as they enact their roles in these imaginary worlds leads them to expand their vocabulary."

Berman, Buchbinder, and Beznedezych, 1968, as cited in Palmberg, 1987, p. 20 cited that there are two types of vocabulary: **potential vocabulary** consists of words a learner will recognize even though he has not yet seen them in the second language. An example would be common scientific and technological terms. **Real vocabulary** consists of words the learner is familiar with after learning them. These definitions of the two types of vocabulary reveal that children assign words to things even if they haven't seen it or when they have seen it already.

Gass, S. M. and Selinker, L. (2008) defined "vocabulary knowledge depth as include not only the meaning of the word, but also semantic relationships with other words, syntactic patterning, collocations, pronunciation, and so forth." This definition tells us that knowledge of words does not only stop in knowing its definition but also how it is used in a context and in a communication.

Gass, S. M. and Selinker, L. (2008) said that the "greater use that learners make of vocabulary items, the greater the likelihood that they will retain these items both in form and in meaning."

2.2 LOCAL LITERATURES

Orillos, L.Q. (1998) encouraged to allow learners to copy a model. Reward if copied words is almost adult-like and punish if not. This notion reveals that imitation is also one way of learning a language; hence, it should be done frequently.

Orillos, L.Q. (1998) stated that "it is a common, informal observation that children are "good imitators." We think of children typically as imitators and mimics, and then conclude that imitation is one of the important strategies a child uses in language acquisition. This conclusion is accurate and global. Researchers have shown that echoing is an important, salient strategy in early language development and an important aspect of early phonological acquisition." These findings state that imitation is only one way of acquiring a language.

Orillos, L.Q. (1998) presented to us the two types of imitation:

1. **Surface-Structure Imitation** – This happens when a person copies the language and focuses only to phonology rather than on semantics.
2. **Deep Structure Imitation** – "This happens when the child perceives the importance of the semantic level of language and attends primarily, if not exclusively to that meaningful semantic level. In fact, the imitation of the deep structure may even block the child's attention to the surface structure so that he becomes, in the face of it, a "poor imitator". This is because at this stage, the child is concerned about the truth value of his utterance and not in the "correctness" of the forms of the language."

IV. METHODOLOGY

The researcher has chosen his case study subject according to the guide given by his course professor, Professor Chiu. It is stated in the guide that, "The ideal subject of this case study is a child between 1 and 1/2 and 3 years old who is starting to learn a first language. Children younger than 1 are not good candidates for the kind of case study you are about to do because getting significant language acquisition data from these children require sophisticated instruments (Written Assignment Guide (2019), retrieved from [file:///F:/DLLE/LLE%20201/WRITTEN%20ASSIGNMENT%20GUIDE%20\(1\).pdf](file:///F:/DLLE/LLE%20201/WRITTEN%20ASSIGNMENT%20GUIDE%20(1).pdf))."

Hence, the researcher chose Matteo Javier C. Razon, also called as "Anong". His subject is the son of his colleague. He decided to choose Matteo because his mom is the only one in his colleagues, who has one-year-old son. The advantage also of choosing him was the researcher can easily ask and interview his mom about the new progress of his son's language learning. Also, their location is somehow near from him, that is why he can visit him from time to time. For instance that they had no classes, he would go to their house since subject's mom was there. Sometimes, when they would go to other places, his mom would notify the researcher to go with them so he can observe Matteo in another place where Matteo would surely produce relevant words. Matteo also has a brother named Rafael, who brought great impact to this study. Rafael had motivated Matteo to speak the words through their play and with their interaction.

Matteo is an interactive and jolly child. He likes to play around and tinker with his toys and other things, which he can see around the house. Sometimes, he even gets the things in his mom's bag and play those. Though his parents talk to him in Tagalog, which is his first language, but they still talk to him in his second language-English; they do this to prepare him for his school, which medium of instruction is English. He also likes to copy whatever people will say, may it be in Tagalog or English. At his age right now, he still babbles and produces polysyllabic words with the same sounds.

The method used in this research is Case study, which means a research method common in social science. It is based on an in-depth investigation of a single individual, group, or event. Case studies may be descriptive or explanatory (Retrieved from <https://guides.ucsf.edu/c.php?g=100971&p=655222>). Hence, this study focuses on one child towards how he acquired the second language at his early age.

Further, the data were gathered through observations and interviews. Therefore, most of the time, the researcher went to the subject's home to observe him and his actuations that were relevant for the study. The researcher took note not only the words he produced, but also the non-verbal actuations such as his facial expressions and body movements. Further, since the child has already acquired some words, which the researcher was not there or was not around, so he conducted interviews with his parents, nanny and to some people, who were always present with the child and asked them how he acquired those and what mechanism he used to learn those words.

Further, the data gathered were analysed according to the theories and principles from the resources used as references for the modular readings. However, there were theories also which are used in the analysis from other sources mostly retrieved from the internet. Hence, the theories were used as the bases of the validity of the findings. Otherwise, it will be recommended for further study.

V. PRESENTATION OF DATA, DISCUSSIONS AND ANALYSIS

5.1 ON IMITATION AND REINFORCEMENT

It has been said that language is acquired through the combination and interaction between nature (Innatist) and nurture (Behaviorist). Language acquisition is better understood if viewed according to the notions of the two theories. Nature cannot stand alone without nurture. For the innate language faculty of human to be triggered, it has to be presented with something from nature which in behaviourism is called as stimulus. While, nurture is also useless without nature or the innate capability of the man to process and categorize data collected.

However, in this study, the researcher focused on how second language is acquired the nurture way through the process of imitation. Imitation is one of the processes of language acquisition, which means the copying and processing of utterances heard from others. Further, imitation in language acquisition is of two types (Orillos, L.Q. (1998): Surface-structure imitation and deep structure imitation. The former means the mere copying of an individual to words heard, while the latter is defined as copying of the utterances heard with processing and internalizing of such. Thus, in this study, the researcher will focus on the deep structure imitation.

According to studies, people who are learning their second language tend to imitate more words than on their first language. Probably because imitation is considered as a shortcut in studying second language Gleason, J.B. and Ratner, N.B (2013). Even at early age, an individual is already imitating words from the utterances of their parents. Usually, a child who is learning second language first copy words from the people whom he has direct contact such as his parents or caregivers. In addition, the imitation process is also strengthened if those people whom the child has the direct contact to are adept in the second language that the child is trying to learn.

During the series of observations that I had in this study, I could really say that Matteo acquired the second language words better if his mom, who is a teacher, would tell him to copy her rather than his nanny. Matteo since he is still one year-old could almost copy the targeted words than the words that his nanny would let him copy. For instance, Matteo would clearly say the word "eat" from his mom rather than to her nanny whom when he copied, he would say "eyt." Hence, more knowledgeable individual is a better model for children than any other since differences occur and the correct way of saying it is mostly done by the more knowledgeable individual.

On the other hand, according to Gleason, J.B. and Ratner, N.B (2013), they said that a child who is learning a language through imitation has also limitations. They can hardly imitate words or sentences, which are too long and contain many syllables of different sounds. Hence, when teaching words through imitation to the child, we should also consider their level of understanding and capability to utter words. Children below two years old are capable of copying monosyllabic or disyllabic words. It is easier also for them to copy words which syllables are of the same sounds that is why during the researcher's observations, it was found out that it was easier for Matteo to copy the words like "Mama", "Papa" and even "dede."

Children also often imitate the labels or names of concrete nouns. Hence, the researcher gave importance to the things, which the child can always see around the place where he was usually there such as at home, school or park. They can easily store it to their memory since they already have a concrete representation of the word being imitated.

Thus, in a video presented by the mother's subject of the study to the researcher, it was easier for Matteo to say the words like "TV" and "toy" whenever he likes to watch television and play toys. This is because the child can always see the TV and toys, and at the same time Matteo's parents are always saying this word in the house.

Imitation process also helps the child in combining words and this happens when the child has already internalized the meaning of the words Gleason, J.B. and Ratner, N.B (2013). When the child makes a connection between the word imitated and the referent then the child can combine words together and syntax is already evidenced but not yet fully developed. For example, when the subject of the study said "Mama Dog" and pointing the dog, that's already an evidence that the child has acquired syntax and semantics.

Lastly, since imitation is under the behaviourist study, the researcher also gave importance to positive reinforcement since it strengthened the internalization of the words imitated and can heighten the possibility that the words copied will be produced again. According to Gleason, J.B. and Ratner, N.B (2013), "rewarding successive approximations to adult-like word strings" can motivate the child to copy words again and again until internalization will happen. The theorists even said that the words imitated can be considered as the child's motivation, since they are able to say new words coming from their own mouth.

Reinforcement is very effective to younger children as well. Hence, adults when teaching the child to imitate words, they usually give the child something such as things or verbal reinforcements to encourage the child to say the words again, because if imitation process will stop, internalization will also halt. For instance, when the subject was told to copy the word "wow." He was able to say word correctly when he's kissed by his mom on his cheeks, but when his mom stopped, he said "Bow.'

5.2 ON GESTURES IN ACQUIRING A SECOND LANGUAGE

Gestures have been always included in the study of language of development. It is considered as a prelinguistic ability of the child when he learns language. We all know that before a child can speak, he does gestures first. This is his way of communicating to his parents or his caregivers for instance when he wants to get something or when he wants to call the attention of someone.

Further, it paves the way for a child to be on his final state in language development not just in learning his first language, but also in learning his second language. For instance, when the child doesn't know what to say, he'll use gestures to convey meaning and to send his intention to the receiver. In Yoshioka and Kellerman

(2006) study, they said that gesture is still considered as a helpful communication strategy in such a way that it fills the gap in speech whenever the speaker forgets or doesn't know how to say the word inside his head.

Just like when the researcher done his observations, he noticed that when Matteo was tickled by his father, he kept on pointing again at his upper torso. The pointing gesture happened because the child wanted that his dad would tickle him again exactly where he was being tickled. Thus, in this event, the child didn't know what to say to his dad, yet because of gesture, he was still able to communicate with his dad though not in a typical communication strategy.

Moreover, gestures also help in learning the second language in such a way that it helps the speaker remember the words or other verbal information during the learning of words because in gestures, the child will develop motoric and visual image of the words. Hence, it's even said that an information is remembered and retrieved easily if mental representations are used.

Other than that, on (Goldin-Meadow, 2003) study, it was found out that difficult words are easier to be understood if paired with gestures especially action words because verbs are easily understood if acted out. Hence, the child will have physical involvement of the meaning of the word, which leads him to better retention and retrieval of the word in his future usage of it.

Further, it is also said that most of the child's learned words are usually coming from their first pointing out and head movement gestures. Just like that, those, this, these and the most famous answers, yes and no.

5.3 ON ASSIGNING WORDS TO THINGS

As children acquired the words or labels of things, they are at the same time developing semantics of those. Hence, in language development, we will also tackle the vocabulary development of the child. In this aspect of language development wherein a child will learn to assign words to certain things since he already has a background of their meanings.

However, knowing and decoding the meanings of words is a long process that is why as early as early childhood and as they learn how to say a word, they should be taught of its meaning, because it is at this stage when the growth of the language faculty of the child is rapid. Hence, it is effective that the child should encounter the referent of the word so that retention and retrieval of its meaning is done easily. To further strengthen it and if the child can, you can also allow the child to use it in a simple discourse.

Thus, the researcher found it effective during his observations with his subject that teaching the child on assigning words to objects, which he always saw, was effective; just like food and milk. Then, the researcher found out that on any kind of solid food, the child labeled it with "namnam" and for drinks, he named it "dede." By this, we can clearly see that seeing the objects or the referent of the words most of

the time helps in better retention of the words and better understanding of the meaning is also evidenced. Though its categorization is generic not specific.

Further, the researcher also wants to reiterate some ways of developing the vocabulary of the child, which are presented to us by Dickinson, D. (2019). He stated on his article that one way to add to the vocabulary of the child is to have quality talk with the child. Opening discussions or topics that would interest the child allows the child to pick up words from it and may use it in another conversation. Encourage the child to have an exchange of idea with him, may it be about complex or even simple topics. Additionally, it is also best to always process to the child words which are hard for him to understand because it is where he can grasp the meaning of it. Lastly, and one of the most important is to allow the child to read books paired with pictures so there is a photographic representation of the word. Through this, the word can be easily retrieved if needed.

In connection to this, in one of the researcher's interviews with the parent of the child and was verified during observations, Matteo can easily assign words to things if he learned the words with pictures or paired with concrete things. Thus, when he saw the referent of the word, he organized his schema and retrieved the word. This proves that if words are learned through direct or contrived experiences, retrieval and storing are easier to do.

Aside from those, pretend play can also help the child learn the semantics of words, especially when he is playing with someone, who has already acquired more meanings than him. For example, when Matteo and his brother were playing with toys, his brother got the car and said "wheel" pointing out one wheel from the toy car. Then, when Matteo's brother brought out another car, Matteo said "four wheel." Hence, more knowledgeable others when paired with someone who is learning a language can be helpful through play because various interactions and explanations might happen.

Moreover, knowledge of semantics is also proved if a child combines the words learned to form simple phrases or sentences. This means that the child can now learn how to connect a word to another word depending on the meanings of each of those words. Further, combining words also needs internalization and process in the part of the child, one cannot retrieve if he does not remember the meaning of the words.

VI. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Summary of findings

Based on the outcomes of researches of known linguists and from the observations of the researcher, it has found out that imitation and gestures can be considered as key factors in successful acquisition of second language especially at an early age. These mechanisms help the child in reaching his final-state in language learning. However, the child cannot acquire the words better without the help of more knowledgeable others.

Just like in imitation, this study revealed that the process of imitation is more effective if the model is expert of the language being learned because he has the greater possibility that he can enunciate and pronounce the words in a correct way. Further, words are being learned through imitation if the referents of the words are always present to the learner and that the learner is given the chance to use these words in a conversation or dialogue. It is also revealed in the study that imitation can help in the syntax development of the child especially if he's doing the deep structure imitation, because in this kind of imitation, he is not just copying the words rather he's processing and internalizing the words and phrases learned; it is also by internalization that rules of the target language is learned.

One thing also that strengthens imitation process is positive reinforcement since the imitation process is under the behaviorist theory. Rewards encourage the child to say the words imitated again and again especially if adult-like sounds of the words is produced. However, the study also tells us that a child also has limitations in the imitation process because a child especially at an early age has a hard time copying polysyllabic words with different sounds and also long phrases. Hence, we should be prudent in giving child words to imitate so that they will not be frustrated if fails to do so.

As regards the other mechanism, which is the use of gestures. It was found out that the reasons why gestures help in acquiring second language are: it provides motoric image of the meaning of the words, allowing the child to store and retrieve words easily since they have a physical experience of the words and gestures help the speakers fill the words, which they don't know making their intentions still clear to the listeners. Further, basic words learned by a child are usually from the pointing out gestures that they do at their early age like the demonstrative pronouns and the basic yes or no words.

Another question, which is answered by this study is the way learners assign words to things or how vocabulary develops and learned. The findings of the study to this questions are: (1) referents should also always be seen by the child to strengthen the connection between the words and its meanings, (2) in learning words, it should be paired with pictures or any concrete object, (3) sustained and quality communication allow the child to pick up words being understood during the course of the conversation, (4) topics that interest the child and play with knowledgeable others can add up to the vocabulary words of the child (5) lastly, book reading to the child is still one the best mechanisms in adding vocabulary to the child, since it is where the child can encounter endless number of words.

6.2 Conclusions

Hence, from the findings of this study, I could say that Matteo, who is the subject of this study, acquired words in second language through the two mechanisms: imitation and the use of gestures. Probably, Matteo acquired some words through these processes because these are considered as shortcuts to language learning, whom a child like him at an early age and hasn't been in a formal school can still do because the mechanisms do not require any academic background. Further, another reason why it's easy to be done because it can just happen anywhere and to any people, whom the child has a direct contact to.

Further, it was also tackled here how the subject assigns words to the things, which he has immediate access to. Hence, from the observations, the subject assigned words to things by having a sustained interaction with knowledgeable others, play, frequent presentation of the word referents and book reading with pictures.

Moreover, the findings are also backed up by the studies of other researchers such as vocabulary learning is better developed if the child talks about complex concepts, which in turn will he might encounter new words and that processing to the meaning of difficult words is promptly done.

Thus, this study is indeed beneficial not only to the researcher but also to others who have direct contact to the child, who is learning a language. This study can also serve as a guide to educators especially to Language teachers in preschool because this tackles how a child acquired second language at an early age, since this contains observations and ideas on how to handle a child who has just started learning his second language.

6.3 Recommendations

Based on this case study, imitation is indeed one of the best mechanisms in acquiring second language. Mostly children learn their second language through this process since it is considered as a shortcut in acquiring second language. It is in this process wherein a child will copy what adults will say and internally analyse those utterances produced to build his grammar and other important linguistic information. However, this process somehow is being questioned in terms of its effectiveness to those children who have hearing impairment; knowing the fact that second language is best learned at an early age. Aside from this imitation process, the researcher recommends to search for another innatist or empiricist based language acquisition theory that would fill in the gaps of the imitation process.

This study also focuses on how children assign names or labels to certain things. In other words, how children develop their vocabulary. Hence, it was found out that children develop semantics and build up their lexicons through reading, presenting things always to them and to talk about interesting topic that would sustain the conversation since it is in conversations or dialogues that a child would learn meanings of complex words. However despite those mentioned mechanisms in assigning words, the researcher also wants to look more into the situations of poor

children whose environment are lacking when it comes to learning resources and whose parents or caregivers are not well-educated to answer their queries.

Lastly, the use of gestures in acquiring second language was also tackled in this study. It was mentioned that children learning second language gesture more often than those who are learning their first language. It is in gesture where children act out the words that they don't know and it is also in gestures where children remember the words because through gestures, children will have physical experience of the meaning. But, to strengthen the effectiveness of gestures, the researcher recommends to dig more into how do gestures help in acquiring words if the receiver interpreted the actions differently.

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