

Language Acquisition on Internet Addiction Disorder Children

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Abstract: The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the intensity of handling children with screens connected to the internet. This has resulted in an increase in cases of IAD (Internet Addiction Disorder) in children. This study aims to determine language acquisition in children with IAD (Internet Addiction Disorder). This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach. The data were obtained through direct observation and experimentation with the research subjects, namely children who were in language acquisition (aged 4-5 years). There are several findings in this study. The first finding is differences in language mastery in children before and during the Covid 19 pandemic. Differences influence this in language input where during the pandemic, children's language input was dominated by the media. The following finding is that children with IAD experience several obstacles in mastering language, such as difficulties in making argumentative sentences, comparative sentences, and assembling sentences in complex stories. Besides that, the following finding is that children with IAD tend to acquire a diverse vocabulary, some of which are not according to age. Through these findings, the researcher calls for the active role of stakeholders such as the government, parents, community, and academics in anticipating the negative impacts of excessive internet use.

Abstrak: Pandemi COVID-19 meningkatkan intensitas penanganan anak dengan layar terkoneksi internet. Hal ini berdampak pada peningkatan kasus IAD (Internet Addiction Disorder) pada anak. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui pemerolehan bahasa pada anak IAD (Internet Addiction Disorder). Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif. Data diperoleh melalui observasi dan eksperimen langsung terhadap subjek penelitian yaitu anak dalam pemerolehan bahasa (usia 4-5 tahun). Ada beberapa temuan dalam penelitian ini. Temuan pertama adalah perbedaan penguasaan bahasa pada anak sebelum dan pada masa pandemi Covid 19. Perbedaan mempengaruhi input bahasa dimana pada masa pandemi input bahasa anak didominasi oleh media. Temuan selanjutnya adalah anak IAD mengalami beberapa kendala dalam penguasaan bahasa, seperti kesulitan membuat kalimat argumentatif, kalimat perbandingan, dan merangkai kalimat dalam cerita kompleks. Selain itu, temuan selanjutnya adalah anak-anak penderita IAD cenderung memperoleh kosakata yang beragam, beberapa di antaranya tidak sesuai dengan usianya. Melalui temuan tersebut, peneliti menyerukan peran aktif pemangku kepentingan seperti pemerintah, orang tua, masyarakat, dan akademisi dalam mengantisipasi dampak negatif penggunaan internet yang berlebihan.

Keywords: Language Acquisition;
Internet Addiction Disorder;
Language Development

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic that has hit the world since 2019, including Indonesia, has caused many negative impacts. The paralysis of the health system caused by the burden of Covid-19 patients, reduced economic growth, an increase in the number of poor people, and reactions have become the main focus of governments in various countries (Darmastuti et al., 2021; Lepore et al., 2021; Macharia & Macharia, 2020). Vaccines and breaking contact between humans are considered the most appropriate solution to reduce the rate of spread. Therefore, the lockdown has become a popular policy worldwide and even recommended by WHO besides accelerating the program. The Indonesian government has strictly not used the term lockdown by closing the country's borders but by limiting the activities of citizens in areas with a high rate of spread or local lockdowns. This activity restriction is indeed considered effective in suppressing the spread of Covid (Khoirunurrofik et al., 2022; Macharia & Macharia, 2020). But on the other hand, it has a negative impact in the short and long term. One of them is in the development of children both physically and psychologically. Typically, children need an environment to maximize their growth. Child interaction with nature will train motor development. Interaction with friends and people around them will help optimize cognitive and affective functions. However, children are forced to cut ties with the environment during a pandemic. This will undoubtedly affect the process of optimizing primary functions in children. Disruption to children's growth and development has the potential to cause long-term impacts that will only be felt in the next few years. s

A critical aspect of child development is language acquisition (Buschmann & Sachse, 2018; Humphries et al., 2019). Language development in children is a crucial phase that indicates that children's cognitive elements are functioning correctly (Buschmann & Sachse, 2018). Language development in children can be influenced by many factors, such as the functioning of the brain, body anatomy related to receptive function and speech production, as well as external factors, such as the family environment and the role of parents (Bettio et al., 2019; Zsuzsanna et al., 2020). Meanwhile, during the pandemic, the role of the environment and parents faded due to activity restrictions. During the pandemic, children's language development was dominated by digital devices (Karani et al., 2022; Simonović & Hinić, 2021; Vrinda et al., 2022), which incidentally did not match the characteristics of children's needs (Mangunsong & Sudarman, 2021; Simonović & Hinić, 2021). Children only learn vocabulary from videos and games on smartphones without knowing the context.

This study aims to learn more about language acquisition in children with Internet Addiction Disorder. By knowing how language mastery is in children with IAD, this research is also intended to provide an overview to the government and stakeholders that Covid 19 does not only have an impact on macro aspects such as economic, social, and public health but also has an impact on children's growth and development. The impact of this damage may only be felt in the next few years with a decrease in the quality of human resources. In addition, this study aims to warn parents and prospective parents early on about the importance of paying attention to children's language development. Parents also need education about screen time settings and assistance when children interact with digital devices.

Internet Addiction Disorder, or IAD, is a broad term that describes an impulse control disorder characterized by spending much time online (Yuan et al., 2011). Also called Problematic Internet Use (PIU), internet addiction is characterized by the difficulty of controlling the desire to interact with the internet via computers, smartphones, and other digital devices (Alheneidi et al., 2021). In general, people with IAD cannot stay away from digital devices. He will feel restless when he is not connected to the internet either the battery runs out, or the connection is lost. Therefore, someone with IAD is straightforward to spot. In addition, other symptoms are specific to IAD sufferers.

Many factors cause the appearance of IAD. First, the rapid development of technology has made the digitization movement occur in every human activity, from information search, communication, navigation, shopping, banking and investment, schools, and other vital activities. Second, the internet provides cheap, simple, and complete entertainment ranging from interactive games, videos, music, and other entertainment that can be accessed easily and quickly. Third, psychologically the human brain is set up to find patterns of activity that create feelings of pleasure, happiness, and satisfaction. Based on these factors, the internet, digital devices, and the needs of modern humans are a unity that cannot be separated and influence each other.

There is much debate in psychiatry about Internet Addiction Disorder and what addictive behaviors constitute true addictions. That being said, gaming disorder (i.e., online gaming addiction or video game addiction) is included in the fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) (Cooper, 2017) as an addictive diagnosis. Behavioral addictions such as IAD have much in common with substance use disorders in that they can affect dopamine levels and other hormones. Excessive and problematic Internet use can also negatively impact family life, work responsibilities, and a person's health, as can alcohol abuse and other substance use disorders.

Like other types of addiction, IAD impacts areas of the brain associated with reward and pleasure (Hou et al., 2012; Ricci et al., 2020). When this part of the brain is activated, dopamine, one of the brain's 'feel good' chemicals, is released along with other pleasurable neurochemicals. When the addictive behavior, in this case, internet use, continues over time, this pleasure and reward center in the brain can build tolerance. Once tolerance develops, the individual must engage in the behavior more frequently to experience the same initial pleasure. In addition, once the brain becomes dependent on these activities to stimulate reward circuits, the person may experience withdrawal symptoms when not engaging in the behavior.

Why does using the internet cause some people addiction? Internet use acts on a variable ratio gain schedule (VRRS) (Manenti et al., 2020) and does similarly to gambling. In VRRS, there are unpredictable and varied rewards. This, coupled with the uplifting and mood-stimulating content found on the internet, enhances and intensifies the reward experience when it occurs. In addition, studies have shown that people with IAD and people with substance use disorders have similar brains and that with excessive Internet use, changes occur in the white and gray matter of the brain. These changes were primarily seen in the prefrontal lobe, which is the part of the brain responsible for remembering details, attention, and planning. Not everyone who uses the internet excessively will become addicted or become addicted, but the problem is real and widespread. Data shows that as much as 8.2% of the population of the United States suffers from IAD.

The following are signs of IAD sufferers (Kottner et al., 2020):

- Not being able to stay away from digital devices and the internet
- Constantly thinking about the things that can be done with digital devices and the internet
- There is irreplaceable satisfaction when doing activities on the internet
- Restless, irritable, and generally moody when trying to reduce or stop their internet use. They routinely stay online longer than planned.

In addition to these five criteria, at least one of the following other conditions must be present (Ho et al., 2014):

- Families, schools, or jobs have been threatened by Internet use
- Lies have been told to family, friends, or therapists about how much they use the internet
- Internet use is sometimes driven by a desire to escape uncomfortable feelings such as guilt, anxiety, depression, etc.

Addiction, whether to a substance or a behavior, has disastrous consequences for the person with the problem and their loved ones. As with IAD, the results involve mental health and social issues. Research has shown that many people with internet addiction also have a co-occurring mental health disorder, such as depression or anxiety. There is debate about which internet addiction or mental health disorders came first ((Gregori, 2021).

In addition, IAD can result in serious social consequences, mainly due to time distraction caused by excessive and compulsive internet use. Academic performance, work performance, and social activities can be compromised and damaged by IAD. Daily routines, such as personal hygiene, nutrition, exercise, and time spent with family and friends, can be disrupted and painful. While these social distractions may seem harmless, they are not. If left untreated, IAD can wreak havoc on a person's life.

The term acquisition is defined as the natural language acquisition of a child when he learns his mother tongue (Aktan-Erciyes, 2021). Acquisition of a second language or bilingualism is a gradual range starting from mastering the first language (B1) plus knowing a bit of the second language (B2), then getting B2 increases gradually, until final earning B2 is as good as B1 (Elgort, 2011). The acquisition of a second language is when a person acquires another language after he has mastered his first language to some extent (Ridge, 2013; Yan & Yang, 2021).

For situations the in (first language) which are in the form of specific regional languages, the second language (second language) is in the form of Indonesian or foreign languages (foreign language). The second language is usually the official language in a particular country. Therefore, a second language is needed for political, economic, and educational purposes. In general, an Indonesian child's first language is their regional language because it is only learned when the child enters school and when he has mastered his mother tongue. Compared to first language acquisition, the second language acquisition process is not linear. According to Krashen (Jegerski, 2021) a second language is learned more than acquire for children. When viewed from the process and development of a second language, there are two ways described by the differentiation and acquisition and language learning hypothesis, namely:

- The first way to develop a second language is language acquisition, which coincides with how children develop skills in their first language. The result or result of language acquisition is competence acquired subconsciously. Other ways of providing acquisition include implicit learning, informal learning, and natural learning. In non-technical language, it is often called "picking up" language acquisition.
- The second way of developing a second language is by learning a language, which refers to conscious knowledge of a second language, knowing the rules, being aware of the practices, and being able to speak about those rules, which are commonly known as grammar. Some synonyms include formal knowledge of a language or explicit learning.

Some theorists of learning a second language argue that children acquire language while adults can only understand it. But the learning-acquisition hypothesis demands that adults also accept that the ability to pick up a language is preserved in adolescence. The view above can explain the differences in language acquisition and learning, (Jegerski, 2021; Mohammad Syam'un Salim, 2013) emphasize the difference between the two in five respects, namely as follows:

- a. Acquisition has the same characteristics as the acquisition of the first language of a native speaker child, while learning a language is formal knowledge.
- b. Acquisition is made subconsciously, whereas learning is a conscious and intentional process.
- c. The acquisition of a child or second language learner learns like picking up a second language, whereas in learning, a second language learner knows a second language.
- d. In the acquisition of knowledge obtained implicitly while in learning knowledge obtained explicitly
- e. Acquisition of formal teaching does not help children's abilities, while in formal teaching-learning.

There are two types of language learning, namely the naturalistic type and the formal type in the classroom (Shafa, 2015; White, 2017). First, actual real type is natural, without a teacher, and unintentionally learning takes place in a social environment. In bilingual and multilingual societies, there are many naturalistic types. Learning language according to this natural type is the same process as acquiring a first language which takes place scientifically, so the resulting language acquisition between children and adults is different. Second, formal ones take place in the classroom with teachers, materials, and tools that have been prepared; language learning in this type is done intentionally or consciously; formal language learning should be better than naturalistic learning, but in fact, it is not, some various causes or factors influence in the language learning process. Even though the study of methodology for learning a second language (or foreign language) has been going on for a long time with considerable costs, it has mostly stayed the same in the way people learn languages.

Several factors influence the acquisition of a second language, namely as follows:

1. Age Factor

Children seem to have an easier time acquiring a new language, whereas adults seem to have difficulty obtaining a second language proficiency level. This assumption has led to a hypothesis regarding the critical age or period for learning

a second language. However, the research results on the age factor in second language learning show the following.

- a. Children aged five years already have good language skills, and the sentences conveyed can be understood by others. In conversation, he use words that connect cause and effect, such as "maybe" or "should".
- b. In terms of the speed and success of learning a second language, it can be concluded that children are more successful than adults in acquiring phonological or pronunciation systems, and many of them even achieve pronunciation like native speakers; adults seem to progress more rapidly than children in morphology and syntax, at least in the early stages of learning; kids are more successful than adults, but not always faster. Age differences affect the speed and success of learning a second language in phonology, morphology, and syntax but do not affect the acquisition of sequences. The emergence of various variations the phonological acquisition is mainly due to the immaturity of the speech apparatus.

2. First Language Factor

Second language learning experts generally believe that the first language influences the learner's second language mastery process (Figuroa Flores, 2015). At the same time, this first language has long been considered a distraction in learning a second language. This is because a learner unconsciously or does not transfer elements of his first language when using a second language. As a result, interference, code-mixing, or error occurs. Based on specific theories or hypotheses, this can be explained as follows:

- a. According to the stimulus-response theory put forward by behaviorists, language results from stimulus-response. So if someone wants to increase the number of chanting, he must increase the acceptance of the stimulus. Therefore, the influence of the environment as a source of stimulus becomes very dominant and essential in helping the learning of a second language. In addition, behaviorists also argue that the process of acquiring language is a process of habituation. Therefore, the more the learner gets used to responding to the stimulus that comes to him, the more likely his language acquisition activity will be. So, the influence of the first language in the form of transfer when speaking the second language will be enormous if the learner is not continuously given the first language stimulus. Theoretically, this cannot be eliminated because the first language has been instilled in the learner. However, this can be reduced with habituation and continuous stimulus reception in the second language.
- b. Contrastive theory states that the success of learning a second language is more or less determined by the linguistic state of the language that has been mastered by the learner before. The second language is a transfer process. So, the structure of the language that has been mastered has a lot in common with the language being learned; there will be a kind of ease in the transfer process.

Conversely, if the structure of the two has differences, it will be difficult for the learner to master both languages.

3. Environmental Factor

The language environment is critical for a learner to learn a new language (second language) successfully. The language environment is everything the learner hears and sees in connection with studying the second language. The language environment includes situations in restaurants or shops, conversations with friends when watching television, reading newspapers, teaching and learning processes in the classroom, and so on. The quality of this language environment is an essential factor for learners to gain success in learning a second language, a formal language. A factor that is also very influential in the language acquisition process is the environmental factor (Figueroa Flores, 2015; Getie, 2020), six factors need careful attention: objectives, learners, instructors, materials, methods, and environmental factors. However, the factors of purpose, learner, and teacher are the three main factors of these three factors. Second language skills concentrate on the learner and the learning process.

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach to present the results. Data was collected through the listen-note method by paying attention to the utterances produced by the research subjects and then recording them. The research subjects were 5-year-old children who experienced internet addiction disorder. The justification of the study subjects having IAD was carried out by a child psychiatrist with the result that several clear signs of IAD were found in the research subjects. Data collection was carried out naturally by not providing intervention to research subjects. After the data was collected, the authors analyzed the data using the LASS (Language Acquisition Support System) theory by Jerome Bruner (Bruner, 1985). In this theory, children's language acquisition is influenced by input from parents, teachers, friends, the media, and the environment. Research focuses on excessive media input on children's language acquisition development.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After making observations of research subjects who suffer from IAD, researchers can find the following things.

a. Pra-Covid and Covid Time

There are significant differences in the development of language mastery of research subjects before the pandemic and during the lockdown period. Before the pandemic, research subjects received various inputs that affected their language proficiency. He gets feedback from parents, the environment, teachers, friends, and the media in a balanced way. He began to imitate different vocabulary and expressions from friends' circles or interactions with his parents. The pattern of communication also goes according to the phase of brain development. Before the pandemic, too, he tended to be able to use the correct expression in different situations. For example, when he is angry

with his friends, it is different when he is angry with his parents. When angry with friends, he tends to be able to restrain himself from overreacting. However, when angry with his parents, he is more expressive. This shows that children can recognize various environments and levels of relationships.

However, during a pandemic where children lost direct interaction with friends, teachers, the surrounding environment, and parents, children experienced various obstacles. First, the affective aspects of children need to develop properly due to a lack of physical interaction with parents, teachers, friends, and the surrounding environment. Children tend to be impulsive and imitate communication and interaction patterns from videos or games they receive through digital devices, as we know that content or content in digital media is not done naturally. There has been a lot of intervention to make it interesting, such as the storyline, audio, and visual editing, as well as the addition of various effects that obviously cannot or do not match the pattern of daily interactions.

b. Difficulty in Arguing

In general, five-year-old children demonstrate the ability to articulate arguments, especially when trying to persuade their parents. While they can effectively respond to inquiries, some may struggle with constructing logical and precise arguments independently. The research subjects in question often rely on imperative sentences rather than offering thoughtful explanations when expressing their desires. Moreover, if their expectations aren't met, they may escalate to raising their tone and crying, indicative of impulsivity and a lack of self-control—a characteristic associated with Impulse Control Disorder (IAD). Those with IAD may perceive the world as a virtual realm where instant gratification is achievable, disregarding the real-world complexities that influence the fulfillment of desires. Understanding the factors that facilitate or hinder the realization of their passions is crucial in addressing these impulsive tendencies.

Furthermore, the need for assistance in formulating persuasive arguments suggests a developmental aspect in their communication skills. It is important to nurture their ability to express themselves logically and with precision. The reliance on imperative sentences and emotional outbursts may be an early indication of challenges in adapting to situations where instant gratification is not possible.

To address this, fostering a deeper understanding of the real-world dynamics and teaching patience could contribute to improved self-regulation. Parents and caregivers play a vital role in guiding these children toward a more balanced perception of their desires and the necessary steps to achieve them. Encouraging a mindful approach to decision-making and emphasizing the importance of perseverance in reaching goals may assist in overcoming impulsive tendencies.

In essence, recognizing and addressing these communication patterns and impulsive behaviors early on can contribute to the child's overall development, setting a foundation for better self-control and effective expression of their needs and desires.

c. Difficulty in Expressing Comparative Sentences

The developmental stages of a child's understanding of comparison encompass various aspects, from basic distinctions in size, texture, smell, and quality to the ability to form complex comparative sentences. Initially, children learn to differentiate between objects based on size and progress to comparing shapes. The next phase involves mastering the creation of comparative sentences using conjunctions such as "but," "however," "if," "more," "less," and other accepted terms in communication.

In practical exercises, a child might initially express a hypothetical scenario like "If I were Raffi's son, I would buy a Ferrari." However, when asked to replace the subject with their mother's name, such as Anggi, errors may surface. For instance, the use of "if" may be incorrectly replaced with "indeed," leading to a correction like "I am indeed Anggi's son, I will buy a Ferrari."

Common mistakes also emerge in sentences like "Back when I was traveling to Ragunan, how come I wasn't invited? Even though I was small." Here, the error lies in using "already small" instead of "still small." Similarly, the phrase "Uh... how come you are like me, even though I am like that too" contains inaccuracies due to the unnecessary use of "despite," which is not fitting for a comparative sentence.

Another instance reveals imprecision: "How come I was wronged by uwa, even though I was wrong." The error lies not in the conjunction "even though" but in the subsequent statement; to express the opposite fact, it should be corrected to "I'm not wrong."

In the expression "I was walking, but there is a cat," a lack of precision is evident. Following the conjunction "but," the sentence should continue with a phrase similar to the one preceding it. For example, it should be modified to "I was walking, but suddenly mom called me."

Analyzing these examples highlights the research subjects' struggle to produce accurate comparative sentences, emphasizing the need for further development in this aspect of their linguistic skills.

d. Acquisition of Vocabulary that is Not Age-appropriate

The internet serves as an expansive reservoir of content, generating millions of pieces every second across various formats—text, audio, and video. Unfortunately, a considerable portion of this content is consumed daily by research subjects without undergoing proper filtration. This unrestricted exposure has a profound impact on the linguistic input children receive, contributing to a remarkably diverse vocabulary at an early age.

In the communication process with their parents, these children occasionally employ language that may not be deemed suitable for their age group. Expressions like "what are you" and "hi guys" may find their way into their speech, reflecting the influence of content encountered on the internet. Moreover, some children may unintentionally incorporate inappropriate language, including swear words, acquired from online sources.

This unfiltered linguistic exposure raises concerns about the appropriateness of the language used by children in their interactions. It underscores the importance of implementing effective content filtering mechanisms and parental guidance to regulate the type of content children encounter online. Such measures become crucial in shaping a child's language development and ensuring that their communication aligns with age-appropriate norms and values. Parents play a vital role in monitoring and facilitating a healthy online environment, fostering responsible language use and communication skills in their children.

e. Difficulty in Producing a Complete Series of Stories

The research subjects display a noticeable impatience when tasked with reconstructing intricate narratives. Particularly evident when asked to retell stories viewed on platforms like YouTube, there is a tendency to expedite the storytelling process, swiftly reaching the story's conclusion. Their impatience manifests in an apparent reluctance to meticulously organize the sequence of events that constitutes the tragedy or climax of the narrative.

For instance, when prompted to recount the story of "Cinderella," a video they have viewed multiple times, significant omissions occur. Elements crucial to the story's outset, such as Cinderella's struggles to attend a party and the poignant detail of her glass slipper left in the palace, are summarily excluded. Instead of methodically unfolding the narrative with attention to each event, the subjects leap directly to the story's conclusion – the point where Cinderella and the prince live happily ever after.

This impatience in storytelling may suggest a challenge in comprehending and retaining the sequential nuances of a narrative. Addressing this issue could involve employing techniques that encourage a more thorough understanding of the story's structure. Engaging in discussions, providing visual aids, and encouraging the subjects to delve into the details of each story element may prove beneficial in enhancing their ability to construct well-rounded and coherent narratives. This approach seeks to cultivate not only patience but also a deeper appreciation for the intricacies of storytelling.

CONCLUSION

Upon reviewing the research findings presented in the preceding chapter, several significant conclusions can be drawn. The first noteworthy observation revolves around variations in language proficiency among children before and during the Covid-19 pandemic. This disparity is notably linked to alterations in language input, with the pandemic ushering in a dominance of media-driven language exposure for children. Furthermore, the research identifies a range of challenges faced by children with Internet Addiction Disorder (IAD) in their language acquisition journey. Notable hurdles include struggles in crafting persuasive arguments, constructing comparative sentences, and effectively weaving complex stories. Additionally, children with IAD exhibit a tendency to incorporate a diverse vocabulary, some elements of which may not align with age-appropriate language norms.

In light of these findings, the researcher advocates for the active involvement of various stakeholders—government entities, parents, communities, and academics—in proactively

addressing the adverse effects of excessive internet use among children. Collaborative efforts are crucial in implementing counseling and educational initiatives aimed at raising awareness about the importance of managing and guiding children during their interactions with digital devices. Specifically, the government, community leaders, and academic institutions play vital roles in initiating programs that promote responsible internet usage. Offering guidance on digital literacy and organizing awareness campaigns can contribute to a healthier online environment for children. Simultaneously, parents are urged to remain vigilant, recognizing potential dangers and negative impacts when their children engage in unsupervised and excessive internet usage. In essence, these recommendations underscore the need for a collective commitment to fostering a balanced and responsible digital environment for children, emphasizing education, awareness, and active involvement from all stakeholders.

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